MEDITATIONS
Jean
ON
Boyse
Several Subjects
IN
DIVINITY.

23-6 Particularly, 18.2.21.

Truſting upon God.
Hungring and Thirſting after Chriſt.
The Power, Evil, and Vileneſs of Sin.
The Combat betwixt the Fleſh and Spirit.

With ſeveral other Subjects.

And ſome choice practical Obſervations throughout the whole.

By the late Reverend and Learned
Mr. JAMES FRASER *of* Brea,
Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Culroſs.*

Faithfully printed from the original Manuſcript.

HEB. xi. 4.— *He being dead, yet ſpeaketh.*

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To the READER.

THE following Sheets need no Recommendation, after so great a Name prefix'd to the Title Page. It may very well be said of the worthy Author Mr. Fraser, *as it was said of* Augustine, *He was a Wonder of Nature, and a Miracle of Grace; he had a prompt and capacious Spirit, a fertile and rich Fancy, and an incomparable Dexterity in unfolding tho Secrets of corrupt Nature, and the Mysteries of Divine Grace. He had a more than ordinary Insight into God's Covenant of Grace, and it would seem, that the Lord had singl'd him out amongst many,* that he might reveal his Son in him. *That Scripture was indeed verified in him,* Psal. xxv. 14. The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant.

In brief, He was an able Minister of the New Testament, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, 2 *Tim.* ii. 15. A burning and a shining Light, *John* v. 35. *While he was here on Earth he shone by his Life and Doctrine, and*

and now he is shining in the higher House, a Saint of the first Magnitude.

The following MEDITATIONS *are faithfully printed from the original* Manuscript; *we would not presume to alter his Way of Speaking, which is peculiar to himself, and which any who were acquainted with him will easily bear with. They were written in his younger Years, and they breathe forth an ardent Love to Christ, being* the Love of his Espousals: *They contain much of practical Religion, press'd in a very Evangelical Manner.*

With what Warmth of Affection does he speak of Christ, *and with what Detestation of* Sin! *With what moving Considerations does he incite to the Love of the One, and the Hatred of the Other! How feelingly does he speak of* The Combat betwixt the Flesh and Spirit! *And how skilfully does he lead to the blessed Fountain, for Strength to overcome! In short, thro' every Page there is a great Strain of Godliness observable; and the great Number of practical Books amongst us, needs make none think the publishing of this unnecessary, seeing Religion is a Subject that can never be exhausted, and the Lord is pleased, in a way of Sovereignty, to reveal more of his Mind to some than others.*

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS
ON SEVERAL
Subjects in Divinity.

MEDITATION I.
Of Trusting upon GOD.

IT hath been a Plague on the Generality of the Spirits of Men, to be much taken up with Duties, in themselves good, and in their own Order good, and convenient; and yet to neglect the more useful Duties, as Believing, Heart-searching, and Watchfulness, and Self-denial: *The Tithes of the Anniſe and Cummin* are taken up pre-

cisely, when the weighty Things, *or more weighty Things of the Law are omitted:* And truly this Duty of trusting on GOD is very much slighted by these who have best Right and Ground to practise it, whilst others, to whom this *Childrens Bread* doth not belong, do greedily snatch at it, *Mich.* iii, 11. So that I think it will be an hard Question to determine, whether it is easier to perswade true Believers to rejoice in their Portion, and to lay hold on the purchased Benefit, than to beat presumptuous wicked Men from their false Hopes.

I shall, in the first Place, lay down some Assertions, then determine some Questions, needful to be known, for the opening up of this Duty of trusting and depending upon the LORD.

Asseri. I. THIS Duty of trusting on the LORD is a moral Duty, tying all Persons at all Times, being from the Beginning of the World: This I say, because many question it, I shall give these Reasons for it. (1.) Because it is universally commanded. Indeed there are some Duties universally enjoined to the People of GOD; *Trust all ye People* upon the LORD; *Look unto me, all ye Ends of the Earth, and be ye saved; for I am GOD,* Isai. xlv. 22. The Reason here is moral,

moral, *For I am GOD alone:* All Ranks and Sorts of People are enjoined this, Psal. cxv. 9, 10, 11. *House of* Aaron, Israel, *and all* the Fearers of God, *Jer.* xlix. The Widows of *Edom* are commanded to trust in the Lord. (2.) The Children of *Israel*, who were a rebellious graceless People, are destroyed for not trusting on the Lord, and *their Days are consumed in Vanity:* Therefore it is the Duty of unregenerate Men to trust on the Lord, *Psal.* lxxviii. 32, 33. and 22, The Anger of the Lord was kindled against them, because they believed not on his Salvation, and *their Days are spent in Sorrow*, because they believe not for his wondrous Works, *Isai.* vii. 9. A wicked *Achaz* is commanded to believe. (3.) Because trusting on the Lord is an honouring of the Lord, and a Thing which the Creature, as a Creature, is bound to do to the Creator. The Lord will not only give a Proof of his Goodness and Severity, *Rom.* ix. 22. for which all the World shall admire him; but he will give a Proof of his Faithfulness: And therefore his People must believe his Word, that the Lord may vent his Faithfulness. And hence we observe that the People of God, whose Life was by Faith, have many excellent Psalms and Songs of his Faithfulness, *Thy Faithful-*

ness is above the Clouds, and above all thy Name, saith *David:* And truly, they who trust the Lord, have this to say at the Evening, Surely there hath not one Word failed of his Promise, *Josh.* xxiv. 14. 1 *Kings* ix. 56. And is it not all your Duty to glorifie the Lord's Faithfulness? Is not this the End for which ye came into the World? Is not Believing a glorifying of God, *Ro.* iv. 20. Abraham *was strong in the Faith, giving Glory to God.* O all ye who think ye should but presume in believing, and stand aloof from the Lord; O remember thou hereby glorify'st the Lord as much and more, as when thou art whole Days praying, reading, fasting and hearing.

Assert. II. ALTHO' trusting in the LORD be a commanded Duty, yet Presumption is nowise, or at no Time commanded in Scripture, but expresly forbidden, *Mic.* iii. 11. *Isai.* xlviii. 2. There the presumptuous staying on God is discommended: The carnal Jews had a Kind of Faith, *We have* Abraham *to our Father*; and this their Faith made them make a Fashion of *flying from the Wrath to come*; there shall no Evil come to us: And so there are several Duties in themselves good, and commanded, yet the carnal Way of going about these Duties is discommended, as a Thing that the Lord will not

not away with: The Lord requires stretching the Hand to God, making of Prayers, keeping of the New-Moons, solemn Feasts; yet as they practised them, the Lord saith, *Who hath required these Things at your Hands*, Isai. i. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Psal. l. 16. To declare the Lord's Statutes is a moral Duty in it self, but it is not a Duty to a wicked Man, hating Instruction, and as he performeth it.

Quest. When is Trusting on the Lord Presumption? And when or how do Men sin in trusting to the Lord? *Answ.* In those five Cases, (1.) When it is done without any Ground or Warrant, by a Command; or when the Duty is done by a carnal Heart, for some seeming Good accruing thereby, when the Man's Obedience is not drawn forth by Virtue and Authority of God's Command: I grant there is a Command for believing on the Lord, staying on him; but their Obedience doth not respect or flow from that Command; and the general Objection will be, *Who hath required these Things at your Hand?* By what Authority dost thou these? *What hast thou to do, to take my Covenant in thy Mouth?* For look as when the *King*, Matth. xxii. *made a Feast*, unto which the *Blind* and *Lame* were invited, and

called to come, and at last compelled; as it was their Duty to come, when called and invited, so it had been Presumption in them to come till the Lord had commanded and invited: And as any Thing done by Virtue of a Command or Call is Duty, so some Things in themselves Duties, and commanded, yet not done by them, as commanded, nor with an Eye to that Command, are Presumption: Fear taught by the Precepts of Men is unwarrantable, not that I mean an actual Reflection upon a Command is at all Times needful; an habitual Authority is sufficient. Consider no Man hath hired us. (2.) When Men trust on the Lord, that they may the more boldly sin, and stand out against all Threatnings of God, and continue in their Sins, then it is Presumption, *Mic.* iii. 11. *Hos.* viii. 2. *Deut.* xxix. 19. For the Lord hath no where warranted, or given a Promise to trust on him, and given a Promise of Freedom from Punishment, notwithstanding they continue still willingly and wilfully in Guilt and Wickedkedness; for this were but to make his Goodness, and Love, and Condescendency, as a Wall, whereon they might build against the Lord, and to make Christ a Pander to their Lusts, and a Sconce to protect their Lusts,

Lusts, and Sins from the Lord; will ye sin, Whore, commit Adultery, and swear falsly, and cry, *The Temple of the Lord*; *Jer.* vii. 9, 10. And therefore, (3.) When the Lord promises any Mercy upon a Condition to be performed, when that Condition is not fulfilled, yet to believe the Accomplishment of the Promise (especially when such a Promise was as a Bait for, and an Allurement to the Condition) is Presumption. If the Lord should have promised *Jehu*, That his Seed should sit upon the Throne to the fourth Generation, if he should kill the Prophets of *Baal*; and if *Jehu* should not have done it, but wickedly contemned the Command, in that Case it had been Presumption in *Jehu* ro have challeng'd the Lord on his Promise, and confidently believed the Performance of the Promise *ex eo capite*, or by virtue of his Transaction. It had been Presumption in *Adam*, to have challenged and expected an immortal Life from God, after he had eaten of the forbidden Fruit, *ex hoc capite*, and by virtue of this Covenant with God; so I deny not, but *Adam* might have Grounds of Hope, from the Goodness and Power of God, for a Remedy, but not by virtue of this Covenant. (4.) When People are confident and per-

swaded of any Mercy, whether spiritual or temporal, which they have no Promise for, but only Grounds of Hopes, from the Lord's loving gracious Nature, which is to stay their Hearts, and keep them only from despairing; when they make this their Ground of Perswasion and Confidence, *Mic.* iii. 11. *No Evil shall come to us; Is not the Lord among us?* For nothing but the Lord's Promise can raise our Faith to a Confidence, and *full Assurance*, *Heb.* vi. 18. 'Tis this only that can give strong Consolation to the Heirs of Salvation; for tho' the Lord be gracious and good, abundant in Goodness and Truth, yet is he not tied to be so necessarily unto thee; *but hath Mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth,* and perhaps thee. *Strip thy self of thy Garments, that I may know what to do unto thee, Exod.* xxxiii. 6. The Lord is free to do any Thing with a sinful People that he pleases, or to all the World; *For who hath given him, and it shall be repaid him?* But the Lord saith, That his Name is *a strong Tower, and the Righteous are safe,* when they flee to it, and *they that trust in his Name shall not be confounded.* I grant all, but then it is not his Name simply that can raise this Confidence and Perswasion, but his Name made

made over by Promiſe and Covenant unto his People; and then it is a ſtrong Tower, and Confidence, and Aſſurance may be built on it: The Lord's Omnipotency, ſimply in it ſelf, will not be comfortable unto *Abraham*, ſo as to take away all Doubts and Fears, unleſs theſe Words be added, *Gen.* xix. 2. *I will make my Covenant with thee.* He therefore that would come with full Aſſurance, let him have the Name of the Lord made over to him by Covenant and Promiſe, *Heb.* x. 21, 22. (5.) Then is truſting on the Lord Preſumption, altho' it be warrantable to truſt in God, yet when any Thing in themſelves is the Ground of that, when we value any Thing in our ſelves, as Privileges, Duties, Gifts, or other Qualifications; when they are valued, I ſay, at ſo high a Rate, as to build our Confidence on them, or to think them the formal Reaſon why God beſtows any Thing upon us, when we claim it by way of Deſert: Now, here many miſtake; for ask them, why they believe the Lord will perform ſuch and ſuch Things; they anſwer, Oh! I have prayed for it; I am humbled, I have ſuch and ſuch Qualifications; Oh! know the Lord will owe thee nothing for that. Thou art but an *unprofitable Servant* ſtill,

still, *Luke* xvii. 10. If the Lord will do any Thing for thee, it shall not be by thy Covenant, even when thou art ashamed and loathest thy self, *but for his Names sake*, and shall make thee know it too, *Ezek.* xvi. 60, 61. The *Jews* cry'd still, *The Temple of the Lord*, and *would take Counsel against* Jeremy. Why, were they not afraid the Lord should avenge his Death? No, they were the People of God; *for the Law shall not perish from the Prophet*, Ver. 18. *Oh! learn, not to let thy right Hand know what thy left Hand is doing* in all these, otherwise ye shall find nothing: *Not for your sakes do I this, but for my Name's sake.* I grant indeed, gracious Qualifications to which Promises are annexed, if seen or felt by the Spirit, may be Ground of Confidence, but not for any real Worth in themselves, but as they are advanced by the Lord's Goodness, to be that which gives the Soul Right, for the Lord Jesus sake; and this doth only serve, to evidence unto us our Right acquired by Jesus Christ, unto all good and spiritual Mercies, and to fit us passively for these good Things which the Lord promises; they have no Value in themselves, but all that they signify is from the Covenant: *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give Glory.*

Glory. All our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags. Casting out of Devils in Christ's Name, is that which a carnal proud Heart casts up unto Christ, and is the Ground of his Confidence.

Assert. III. ALL Faith in unregenerate Men, and Hypocrites, and all Dependance they have in God, altho' it be not saving, but ordinarily fails, yet is not Presumption, but a kind of Faith, coming short of true Faith. These mentioned, *Heb.* vi. had no Question some Faith, and he who came upon the King's Invitation, which is an Act of Faith, to the Supper, it was not Presumption in him simply to come; nay, his Guilt had been very great if he had not come, although he had not the wedding Garment: nay, he is not reproved for coming, but for not having the wedding Garment, *Matth.* xxii. 12. Nor could he have shifted the Call; Oh! I want a wedding Garment; for all were invited, whether they have it or not: When Faith or Trusting is put in Practice from a Command, it is no Presumption, altho' other Faults make it a lame Faith, and an unprofitable Faith, as to save them, *Exod.* xiv. 33. The Children of *Israel*'s Faith is commended and mentioned, tho' it was not saving, *Exod.* xiv.

xiv. 31. *They believed the Lord and* Moses: And truly, tho' they came short of a saving Faith, yet it wants not its Reward, and is a less Sin, than wilful Unbelief, *John* ii. 23, 24, 25. The People of *Israel remembred that God was their Redeemer, and their Rock.* And truly this might produce some Dependance on God for outward Mercies, *Psal.* xxviii. 35: And look, as *Jehu*'s Reformation, *Ahab*'s Humiliation is recorded, and rewarded by God, altho' none of them were found and real, either in the one or in the other, 1 *Kings* xxi. 29. 2 *Kings* x. 30: So may the Lord reward a temporary Faith, and believing upon him. There is no Question, but when the *Israelites*, in the Time of the *Judges*, cry'd unto the Lord for a Saviour, they had some Dependance on him; otherwise what would have made them come to him? And this I say, because many are press'd in their Conscience to believe, are invited, requested to come in, nay commanded, threatned unless they do believe, and yet are still kept off with this, Oh! I fear I shall presume, I cannot believe; no more can you pray, sanctify a Sabbath, or meditate, yet ye do as you can, because you are commanded; do so here, do what thou canst, and verily, tho'

thou

thou come short of saving Faith, thy Guilt shall be less. But shall I believe without a Promise; I grant conditional Promises, you cannot promise your selves the Performance of them; because, the Condition is not performed. Oh! But look up unto the Lord for these which he hath promised absolutely; Look up to his Power, Love, and Goodness to work it in thee: And truly here is Ground for all, to say, It may be the Lord will be gracious, and to conclude that *there is Hope concerning this Thing*; and there to stay and say, *Let the Lord do what he will with me.*

Assert. IV. THERE is a Twofold Faith and Trust, one is a Faith of *Assurance*, another is a Faith of *Dependance*, and it is not the Duty of any unregenerate Man to depend on God, by the Faith of *Assurance*; for this Faith of *Assurance* is built upon the Promises of God, *which are only yea and amen in Christ*: In whom, no unregenerate Man hath any Interest. The Faith of *Dependance* is built (in an unregenerate Man, I mean) upon the Goodness, Tenderness, Love, and Power of God, which he is free to communicate, when and where, and to whom he pleases, which, in themselves, cannot be Ground of Confidence, or Perswa-

sion

sion, unless, as promised to the Soul: Now all Promises flow unto Believers by Christ, *Eph.* ii. 12. I grant likewise, that a Man cannot have good Ground of Duty, to lippen unto the Lord's Goodness, without Christ; or that the Lord shall do any Thing to him without the Lord Jesus, and for his formal leaning to God so qualified; nor can he expect any Thing from the Lord upon that Account: *If so be there may be Hope*, yet is he to look up to him.

Assert. V. IT is a most difficult Thing to believe, and depend upon the Lord: We may see this in the *Israelites*, when they were in the Wilderness, all the Mercies, Wonders, Testimonies of the Lord's Good-will shown to them, could not break them off their Unbelief; *For they sinned more and more, and did not believe, for all his wondrous Works*; sometimes through Sense, which is still contrary to Faith. Oh! Can these Things be? *Can he prepare a Table in the Wilderness? Shall* Sarah *have Pleasure that is old? Tho' the Lord should open the Windows of Heaven, this cannot be*; sometimes Anguish of Spirit, and outward Afflictions. *Exod.* vi. 9. The Children of *Israel* could not believe for Anguish of Spirit, and cruel Bondage; sometimes, and mainly by

by Reason of Guilt. Oh! I must not touch this Ark, lest I be smitten through; my Sins are many, I cannot look up; and therefore, *depart from me, for I am a sinful Man; shall the Childrens Bread be given to such a Dog as I am,* who hath sinned so hainously and grievously? so as never one was so vile; never one had such a stubborn Heart, a dead slothful Heart. And, *Lastly,* Because many mistake the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, thinking to fetch Money to buy Wine, Milk, and other saving Graces; because thou art *poor, miserable, blind,* and *naked*; nay, because thou knows it not, I counsel thee to buy of me *fine Gold, and Raiment, and Eye-salve,* Rev. iii. 18. And true Believers find much Difficulty here sometimes, and Unbelief hath Word about with Faith.

FOR the opening of this Duty more fully: I shall unfold these Things.

First, WHEREIN doth this Duty consist, and what it doth import.

Secondly, GIVE some useful Directions, showing how the Soul may be enabled to depend on God.

Thirdly, WHEREIN the Leaning or Faith of Believers doth mainly differ from that which is counterfeit, and in Hypocrites.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, GIVE some useful Cautions for preventing of Mistakes, that ordinarily arise anent this.

Fifthly, GIVE some Motives to press forward this Duty.

FOR the *first*, Then know that this Duty doth consist in these Things.

(1.) DENIEDNESS to our selves, and our Abilities, and to any other Thing beside God: The Soul must see no Help in it self, or in any other Creature, otherwise it will be leaning to such broken Planks. 2 *Chron.* xx. 12. *We have no Help against this Multitude, and our Eyes are towards thee.*

THEY are cursed, who make the Arm of Flesh their Confidence, or any Means: This is a Covering, but not of God's Spirit; and truly, here is the first Ground Work of solid, and sound believing, and Dependance on God. *Jer.* xvi. 19. *O Lord, our Fathers have inherited Lies, Vanity, and Things wherein there is no Profit*; and therefore, when these empty Cisterns are seen, which the Lord doth commonly, by breaking these Pitchers, and making them fail in their greatest Extremity, there is no more depending upon them: Asshur *shall not save us; we will ride no more upon Horses; in vain have we looked for Salvation from the Mountains:*

Mountains : And hence not leaning to the Understanding of Men, and trusting to the Lord, are coupled together. *Prov.* iii. 5. (2.) A seeing of all Fulness in the Lord, a Plaister for all their Maladies and Sores; so that what the Soul lacks, it sees it in the Lord, it sees the Lord powerful, and willing to bestow; *In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Strength* : It sees all Fulness in him, the Ocean and Sea of all Comfort; and hence, called *the Fountain of living Waters*; and hence, the first Question asked at those which came to Christ, was this; *Dost thou believe I am able? He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. xi. 6. *O* Israel, *thou hast destroyed thy self; but in me is thy Help found*, Hos. xiii. 9. And this fills the Soul with a great Delight, when it sees all the Desires of his Heart in God, which Men cannot take away, whence arises a Hope in the Soul: *O, it may be the Lord will be gracious*; and thus, when the Saints see all the Strings on their Bows broken, all Pitchers broken, all Cisterns empty, yet here they can retire, and here solace, and delight themselves; and by thus believing in God, all the vast, and capacious Desires of their Soul, which all the

World could not satisfy, are here answered, and fulfilled; as is most clear, *Psal.* xxxvii. 4. (3.) There must be a prizing of all these Things, in hungring and thirsting after them; and this is principally occasioned by the Suitableness of all these Things to the Creature's Wants; O! I am blind; the Lord is Light; Christ is a Light; and I am foolish, imprudent; *The Lord giveth Wisdom, he is the only wise God*, and the *wonderful Counsellor*; I am weak; O, I am weak; the Lord is strong: *In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Strength.* O! I am under the Power of Sin and Satan, and am guilty: *But with him is Mercy and plenteous Redemption, and he will redeem* Israel *from all his Iniquities.* But I have many Enemies; *He will be a Refuge, a Sun, and a Shield:* O! but my Contentments are broken: *Delight thy self in the Lord, and he will fulfil the Desires of thine Heart*; so that a Christian finds all in God, and this makes him hunger long, and thirst for the living God; *for with thee is the Fountain of Life:* An ignorant, hard, proud, covetous Person, who hath more than Heart could wish, prizes not this; why? he hath the Desire of his Soul; we are Lords, we will not come to thee, *we will ride on Horses, and go to* Egypt, there their own Sparks

Sparks warm them; but know it, *ye shall ly down in Sorrow*, and your Pursuers shall be swift. To conclude, none will depend on God, for that, which he thinks, he hath himself; and tho' he wants both, yet he prizes it not, hungers not, nor thirsts not after the Lord; and therefore, looks not unto the Lord for it. (4.) There must be a Ground laid, upon which the Soul builds, and this must be nothing in the Creature it self, but all in God, and it is either his Goodness, *thou art Good, and dost Good: With the Lord is plenteous Redemption, and he will redeem* Israel *from all his Iniquities*; or his Power, and his Faithfulness; and where there is a strong Faith, it is built on this, *Psal.* cxlvi. 5, 6, 7. *Happy is the Man, who hath the God of* Jacob *for his Help; He made Heaven and Earth*, there is his Power; *who keepeth Truth for ever*; there is his Faithfulness; *who executeth Judgment for the oppressed, and giveth Food to the hungry*; here is his Goodness. Sometimes former Experiences; *He that delivered me from the Jaws of the Bear, and the Paw of the Lion; the Lord will deliver me from this uncircumcised* Philistine: Sometimes from a Command; and then he saith, *He hath not commanded the House of* Jacob *in vain to seek his Face*; and therefore, there is

Hope; sometimes *the Blood of Jesus Christ, which speaketh better Things than that of* Abel, *is holden up*, for this *Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men*; and *having such an High-priest*, may come *with full Assurance to the Throne of Grace*, Heb. x. 23. Sometimes the Promises of God, and these yield strong Consolation to the Heirs of Glory, when their Security is God's Oath, by two immutable Things; O Believers! depending on the Lord is no vain Thing; for they shall *renew their Strength like Eagles*, that so do; Nor is it a groundless Thing; nothing can make your Confidence and Hope groundless, but when it is builded on your selves. (5.) Expectation of Good from these Grounds, *I will look unto the Lord, from whom my Help cometh: Our Eyes are towards thee, O Lord*; Hence *David* saith, *My Expectation is only from the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth*; for if the Soul come to say, *There is no Hope in* Israel *concerning this Thing*, then farewell Faith, and depending upon the Lord; and therefore, *it is fit that a Man should both hope, and quietly wait for the Salvation of his God*, Lam. iii. 26. None can trust on the Lord for any Thing, but such as expect from him; he could not trust on God, who said, *Surely, tho' the Lord*

Lord should open Windows in Heaven, yet could not such a Thing be, 2 Kings vii. 3. (6.) There is resting, and quieting, and Satisfaction to the Soul; and therefore, it is *casting your Burdens upon the Lord; trust in God, and be of good Chear:* For when the Soul hath, by Faith, seen all Fulness in God, and depended upon him, and by the same Faith hath seen the fulfilling of the Promise; *For Faith is the Evidence of Things not seen, the Substance of Things hoped for;* Faith embraces all as its own, e'er it be put in actual Possession of a Jot, having the Lord's Security, this cannot but stay the Heart, and all the Time that it wants the Mercy, it accounts the same to run on Interest; *Isa.* l. 11. *Let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God;* The Heart will rest on the Lord in Hope, the Soul disburdening it self of all its Cares, and lays them on the Lord himself; hence trusting on the Lord is called, *a casting the Burden on the Lord.* Now here Hypocrites Faith comes short; for tho' they make a Fashion of leaning upon the Lord, yet their Hearts are commonly never more lighted, but their Fears remain in as great Vigour as ever, because they can never fully believe the Lord's Faithfulness, nor his Good-will,

nor his Power; hence their Hearts are ever troubled, especially in temporal Mercies, in the Want of which they cannot live purely on God, because he was never their Rest; whereas the Believer, give him God, give him Christ, and he seeks no more, as is clear, *Hab.* iii. 17, 18. Oh! A living God is the most desirable Thing in the World; a naked Christ is sweet, is comfortable: *God is our Refuge*; and therefore no Troubles, tho' the Foundations of the Earth be shaken, *Psal.* xlix. 1. Now, every wicked Hypocrite, let him leave never so many Things, yet a carnal Heart, which still cleaves to him, never leaves him; and hence can never be satisfied with a spiritual Good alone, and cries still, *Give, give*; *who will shew us any Good?* Hence will trust the Lord for this for a while, but the Vision tarries; nay, no hopes of it; and therefore, *why should I wait any longer upon the Lord?* The Lord himself doth not, nay cannot comfort him; *Can he give us his Flesh to eat?* And therefore, wanting their Jewel, the Life of their right Hand, hence sink, *and their Hearts die like a Stone within them.*

THE next Thing I promised was some Directions enabling us to trust, or how we may depend upon God; and the Means are

these

these, 1. Labour not only to know thy Wants, but to feel thy Wants, so as thy Soul may hunger and thirst for the Thing hoped for, and never be satisfied, until the Lord fill it with good Things, *Isai.* xxv. 4. Feel thy own Wants, and thy Misery, by reason of them. Oh! the Plague, the Evil, the only Evil of the whole World: Their Wants are many and great, they know they want such Things, they want God, they want Christ, they want Strength, Life, they want Grace, they are dying, and pining away in their Sins; yet cannot they mourn, nor feel their terrible Evil, by reason they eat, live, sleep, drink, *and in a Moment go down to the Grave,* and none of these Evils laid to Heart; hence can live eternally without the Lord, never mourn for him, never long for him, never break their Nights Sleep for him. Oh! here is their Wound; they know their Want of God and Christ; and if a few formal lazy Prayers will fetch him, this they will bestow; if not, even fare him well, they can shift well enough without him; their Hopes, Graces and good Duties, and Desires, comfort and give Peace, and the World gives Satisfaction and Contentment; and thus their Minds are satisfied: Oh! labour therefore to know, and feel your Need of the Lord Jesus, and

of all spiritual Mercies, that thou mayst with the Prodigal find it *starving* to stay from *thy Father*, *Luke* xv. and Death, and going down to the Pit, and then verily the Lord will help; for he invites such. This gives thee a Right first, and will help thy Confidence, when thou seest a Promise, *Isai.* lv. 1, 2, 3. This will help thee to go about all the Means which the Lord will have to convey any spiritual Mercy. A Man that prizes not a Mercy, sees not his Misery in the Want of it; and therefore will not care much whether he have it or not: But, Oh! when the Soul comes to this, I must have Christ, I must have Heaven, I must have Grace, I cannot longer want it, I die, and pine away, I will do any Thing for my Life, I will give any Thing *for the Sin of my Soul.* The Jews were *pricked at the Heart*: Then, *what shall we do?* We will do any Thing. Hence Men on Death-bed will promise any Thing for a little more Time, because now they see and feel the Need of it; and in Hell Reprobates would do any Thing: Now they see the Necessity of it, as seen and felt, *Isai.* xli. 17, 18, 19. When *David* was overwhelmed, and had none to save him on the right Hand, or on the left; then *thou, Lord, art my Refuge, and my Portion in the Land of the Living*, as is clear

clear from *Psalm* cxlii. 4, 5. (2.) Labour to be well acquainted with the Lord's Name, which is the righteous Man's *strongest Tower*, to which he always retires, *Prov.* xviii. 10. 'Tis said in *Psalm* ix. 9, 10. *The Lord is a Refuge for the oppressed;* and, *They that know thy Name, will put their Trust in thee.* Verily there needeth not much more to a solid Believing, and *a living the Life of Faith*, than a knowing the Name of the Lord: And truly the Saints did draw all their Arguments from this Armory; and this is taking hold on *the Lord's Strength;* and this makes Men prevail with the Almighty. What! art thou sinful, and cannot get them removed at all? Thou knowest not if the Lord will: *He is a God that subdues Iniquity, and therefore will cast them in the midst of the Sea*, Mic. vii. 19. Art thou weak, and hast none to do for thee? Remember *the Lord helpeth the oppressed against those that are too strong for him*, Psalm xii. 5. Would his People have any great Act done, in which the Name of the Lord might be seen? O then the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, the *God of all Flesh, that made Heaven and Earth*, Jer. xxxii. 17, 18, 19, 20. *Trust in the Lord*, (saith *David*) *in him is everlasting Strength:* He can help thee, he made Heaven and Earth; *he is Faithful*

that

that promised; he is true and righteous in all his Ways. But, will he do Good? Yes, *he executeth Judgment for the oppressed*, Psalm cxlvii. 6, 7, 8. Job v. 8, 9, 10. I would commit my Cause unto him; Why? He doth *marvellous Things without Number*; *he pulleth down, and raiseth up. Thou art good, and dost good; teach me thy Statutes.* The Lord cannot deny his Name; and this fills the Soul with Comfort, and gives it Confidence, in that in a manner it is God's Nature to help, kind, compassionate, *having Mercy on whom he will*, delivering the oppressed, *abundant in Goodness and Truth*; and therefore will deliver *Israel from all his Transgressions.* Ps. cxxx. 7, 8. *With the Lord is Mercy.* (3.) Get an Interest in God, make him your all, and this will wonderfully strengthen Confidence and Faith; they that see no Light, and would trust on the Lord's Name, must stay upon his God, *Isa.* 50. 10. Make the Lord thine, embrace Christ, and all his Fulness, when offered at any Time, and then make bold with him and his; a Woman that would command any Thing belonging to any Man, must first marry the Man, and then what is his is her's. *Psal.* xxiii. 1. *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want*; and the Ground is, *He that giveth us his Son, how shall*

shall he not with him freely give us all Things? Psal. lxiii. 1. *O Lord, thou art my God, early will I seek thee.* This makes the Soul prize the Thing longed for, when it considers that as belonging and appertaining to it self; this sets a Value upon Things; and hence *David*, in the Place forecited, saith, *My Soul thirsteth, and longeth for the Lord:* This doth engage the Lord, as it were, to look to thee; thou art then his own, his Child, his Spouse, his Friend, *Isa.* lxiii. 14, 16. *Jer.* xxxi. 20. *Is* Ephraim, *my dear Son? is he a pleasant Child? For since I spake against him, I remember him: I will surely have Mercy on him*; and this from his Love, and his Credit. What, shall he suffer his own to want? The Lord will, for his Honour's sake, see to his own, that have committed themselves unto him. This will encrease the Soul's Confidence; Is he a Father, Husband, Guider, and Counsellor to me, and shall I doubt of this? *Isa.* lxiii. 18. *I am thine, preserve me.* The Soul, may, in a holy Boldness, say, I make use of my own. *Nehemiah* builds his Confidence on this, *Neh.* i. 10. and yet more clear in *Jer.* iii. 23. *Truly in the Lord our God is Salvation: The Lord will not cast off his People, Hab.* iii. 19. Consider to whom thou hast done this;

this; his People may say, *O Lord God of our Salvation*, Psal. cii. 24. *This is our God, we have waited for him, Isa.* xxv. 9. This will help the Soul to honour the Lord; *If I be your Father, where is mine Honour?* and to see the Lord's Glory in its Good, *Not unto us, but unto thy Name.* The Lord is a Stranger to every unregenerate Man, and to every Hypocrite; and therefore he cares not what becomes of him or of his Glory. Now, a Soul united unto Christ by Faith, and married unto the Lord, they have one common Interest, and the Lord's Honour is his Honour, and therefore he seeks it as his own. (4.) *Direction*, Labour to see the Lord's Glory in performing of all these Things for thee, for which thou depends upon him, and this will breed Confidence; for a Man may, and easily will perswade himself of this, that the Lord will glorify himself; and because their particular Interests are woven in with this, hence believing the one, he believes the other, which is inseparably annexed to it, and this is it that moves *Moses*, and strengthens and steels his Prayers with Faith, even tho' he had to do with a stiff-necked and rebellious People. *Why should the* Egyptians *say*, &c. *Exod.* xxxii. 12. The Church in

in the *Lamentations*, *Oh Lord consider me, for the Enemy hath magnify'd himself; deliver me out of Prison, that I may praise thee*, and then *thou wilt deal bountifully with me. Not unto us, not unto us O Lord, but unto thy Name give Glory; for why should the Heathen say, Where is their God?* Hence *David* prays to deliver him from his Enemies, *that they may know thou hast done it, that they may fear and tremble*: Hence, *when none is shut up, or left, the Lord will appear for his Name's sake.* Oh! a dead Heart, *quicken me*, that I may praise thy Faithfulness, thy Power; enable me to do such and such Duties, that I may see thy Power, and Condescendency, and Love, that I may bless thee for it, that thou may get thee a great Name. This evidences likewise the Soul's Sincerity, and so its Acceptance with God; and this makes the Soul long more for the Accomplishment of the Promise; for it shall see not only its own Good, but the Lord's Glory: But beware of Sin, for otherwise he will take Vengeance and punish, tho' he let his Name be blasphemed, and this is most sad. (5.) Pore not much upon Improbabilities, or Grounds of Distrust: Oh! I am exceeding sinful, and therefore I cannot look up; can the Lord find in his Heart

Heart to pardon such Iniquities? Oh! such starv'd; *Can such dry Bones live? Can such a barren* Sarah *that is old, and my Husband also, have Pleasure? I am the least of all the Tribes of my Family, and shall I deliver* Israel? *By whom shall* Jacob *arise, for he is small? There is no Hope, we have loved Idols; we pine away in our Iniquities, and how shall we be saved? Tho' God should open Windows in Heaven this cannot be.* I say, away with these Things; mind the Command, the Promise, the Power, Faithfulness, Goodness, Freeness, and Unchangableness of God: This was *Abraham*'s Way, *He considered not his Age, nor the Deadness of* Sarah's *Womb, but believed he was faithful that promised.* Overlook Sin, Deadness, Difficulty, Unlikeliness, and set thy Heart on the other; for Sense gives a bad Report, and says, it cannot be; Why? I am exceeding sinful: Oh! *but my Ways are not as your Ways, nor my Thoughts as your Thoughts. (6.)* Help Unbelief with Prayer, *I believe, Lord help my Unbelief.* Prayer is an excellent Help to Faith: Lord increase our Faith. *Notwithstanding I will be enquired of the House of* Israel *to do it for them. Thou wilt prepare their Hearts, and cause thine Ear to hear.* Do not think your Duty is done when you have

a dry, barren dead Heart, famish'd and believed; no, but pray earnestly for it. (7.) See to former Experiences, either of others, or of your selves: Of others, *O Lord, our Fathers trusted in thee and were helped: The Lord hath delivered us, and will yet deliver us. He hath freed my Soul from Death. I will yet praise him, he hath done so great Things already for me,* when there was as little Cause, and therefore why not now. *He delivered me from the Lion's Paw, and therefore, from the uncircumcised* Philistine. He hath brought me out of *Egypt*, and therefore, from the Wilderness. (8.) If you see any Qualification to which a Promise is annexed, find it out; *My Soul is humbled within me, therefore have I Hope.* He that would preserve Faith, must have a pure Conscience; it will not take kindly with any other Soil: Here is the Ruin of all our Confidence, of all our Faith; Sin comes, hides the Lord, and separates him from us. New Acts of Treason retires a Pardon almost sealed unto our Conscience. *When I would have healed the Sin of* Judah, *the Iniquity of* Ephraim *brake out: This separates betwixt the Lord and us,* Hos. vii. 1. Oh! ye that would maintain a Faith, and keep a

Glo-

Glorying, and a Boasting in the Lord all the Day long, beware of Sin, and follow Holiness, and then ye may assure your selves of what ye please; he that comes with full Assurance, must come with *a Conscience sprinkled, and washen in the Blood of Jesus Christ*, Heb. x. 22. 1 John iii. 22. *Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments.* Oh! innumerable Evils, innumerable Iniquities keep many from looking: *Depart from me, for I am a sinful Man.* And God saith, Depart from me, for I am an holy God; I cannot look upon your Misapprehension, your Slight, your formal Dead, hypocritical selfish Prayers; Sin comes and wrings the Promise from a Soul; look therefore to thy Way.

The Third Thing I promised to infer, was, to show wherein the Faith of *Believers* did mainly differ from *Hypocrites* Faith; but because I have hinted at some Things already, I shall only at this Time, omitting many other Marks, give these following. (1.) *Difference*, The Believer's Faith is mixed with much Love to the Person of *Jesus Christ*, and 'tis their Love that will not suffer them to have hard Thoughts of Christ; Oh! it cannot enter into my Mind; 'tis

'tis their Love, and Christ's Excellency seen by a marvellous Light and Glory, that makes them cling so to Christ, as they cannot part with him, and reads such Lectures of Love and Lovelineſs in the Face of God through Christ, as it thinks; Oh! one Act of Cruelty or Anger cannot stay there; *Fury is not in him*; and, *tho' he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, Job xiii. 15. and hence it is called, *a Faith that worketh by Love*, 1 Theſſ. i. 3. *Your Work of Faith, and Labour of Love.* Oh! it cannot part with God, it cannot bide away from him. Now, a Hypocrites Faith proceeds not from this Root, nor acts so: It is either Fear or Want, and hence his Enemies submit, *Psal.* lxvi. 3. Nor are their Hearts a Whit warm'd by all their Faith and Dependance upon God, but is the same still as formerly. Oh! that bleſſed Frame; *To whom shall we go, for thou hast the Words of eternal Life.* (2.) It never mortifies or subdues Sin in Hypocrites; it indeed calms the Conscience, gives Peace, stifles Conviction, puffs up, hardens in Sin; but it never subdues Sin, it never discovers the Excellency of Christ, and his Holineſs, by which the Vileneſs of Sin is best seen, *Mic.* iii. 11. 1 *John* iii. 3. *Every one that hath this Hope*

purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Hence, ask our most presumptuous Hypocrites, Have they Faith? Yes, tho' it be but small. But now, pose them again, What Sins have ye mortified, what Advancement in Holiness, what more prizing of God than formerly? What more admiring of God? Here they are at a Loss; some more Knowledge is all, and this is all their Experience, and their Affections are a little tickled: Oh! know it, your Faith must purify your Heart, if of the right Make. Hence Mrs. *Hutchinson* afterward turn'd *Antinomian*, yet, while she seem'd to be of the Saints, acknowledged to Mr. *Cotton*, That she found an Increase in her Faith, tho' not in her Sanctification. (3.) It rests in Christ, as well as on Christ; now, a Hypocrite rests on God, but rests not in him, *Isa.* xlviii. 3. I mean, a Believer doth not only rest on the Lord, but finds real Rest and Satisfaction in the Lord alone, *Psal.* cxlii. 5. *Thou art my Refuge, and my Portion, in the Land of the Living*; and in this he can rejoice, *Tho' the Fig-tree flourish not*, Hab. iii. 17, 18, 19. A Hypocrite hath a carnal Heart, which evermore cries, *Give, give*, and can never be satisfied with a spiritual Object, can never win to rest and center in Christ alone, nor

nor make him their *All in all*; but the Lord gives them Ease and Peace, and may be keeps them from some Sin, that now and then wrings their Conscience, and the World gives Rest and Satisfaction to their Soul, and hence there is Double-mindedness and Unstableness in all their Ways. (4.) A Hypocrite never trusts on God for all Things, but for some Things, for Deliverance from some outward Evil; *No Evil shall come near us, we are* Abraham's *Children*: For Pardon and Peace, but not for Sanctification; or if it be, 'tis for the Removal of some Sin, not all Sins; some Sins which discredit him, breaks his Peace most; for look as a Hypocrite is wounded, so he addresses himself for Cure: Now his Wound is, Oh! God is angry, flee to the City of Refuge, saith Conscience; but there are these Sins which I cannot get subdued, and that I fall into, that breaks my Peace, and by which I shall one Day perish; Christ came to subdue Sins, comfort thy self for this, trust to him, and he will remit this: Now observe it, it is not all Sins that he comes to Christ for, else *Herodias* must be put away; and therefore not Sin as Sin which he hates, else every Sin should be hateful, but Sin as breaking his Peace; and therefore cast

out *Jonas*. Nor is it Holiness, as it is the Image of God, the Beauty of Christ that is desired; but I would have this Grace, and the other Grace; Why? To comfort Christ's Heart with? No; What then? To give me Peace, to adorn my Profession, to keep off spiritual and temporal Judgments, to be Evidences of God's Love. Oh! this is dreadful Hypocrisy. The *Jews* trusted on Christ, but he could not commit himself to them. The *Israelites* they trusted on the Lord, but it was to keep them from Evil, *Mic.* iii. 11. Saints trust on him for subduing of Sin, and all Sin, hence that Call is strongest; *Return O backsliding Children, and I will heal your Backslidings*, Jer. iii. 23. *Thou wilt subdue Iniquities.* (5.) It is mix'd with Repentance. *Acts* ii. 39. *Repent and believe the Gospel. Niniveh* repented and believed: There is nothing that opens the Fountain of Grief more than this; Oh! Will the Lord pardon, will he yet accept such a whorish Adulterous Heart, that *hath play'd the Harlot with many Lovers*? Will he give himself and Christ, to be a Husband, Brother, Friend, Father, Counsellor to me in all my Ways? Will he beautify me with his own Image, will he dwell with me here, and bring me

to

to Glory? Oh that ever I should have been so vile and Graceless; and this fills the Soul with Grief, *Shame, and Confusion of Face*, Ezra x. 1, 2. Jer. iii. 22. 25. 'Tis him who saved me, died for me, looked on me, when he passed by others; what shall I do for him, who hath done so much for me, and never rested. Now, here many a Hypocrite discovers himself, he believes, trusts, but his hard Heart is not broken, his Brow of Brass remains, that it cannot blush or be ashamed; nay, Oh terrible! his Faith hardens him: *No Evil shall come near us, we have* Abraham *to our Father*, and therefore no Need of Repentance; *We were never in Bondage*. Hence ye shall find some say, *Oh! what shall I do to be saved?* Sins are many, grievous, Conscience wounds and smites, and a Spirit of Heaviness; and none can give Peace, Ease or Comfort when the Lord troubles. Now trust on the Lord, no Salvation in Duties, or self, but in the Name of Jesus; thereupon they scratch like Thorns the Lord, and snatch like *Dogs* at *the Childrens Bread*, not out of Love to Christ, or with Intention to give the Heart, Soul, and all the Man to him, but to comfort them, as I oft said, and hence are no more troubled, for want of Peace was their Wound; they

have this, and hence, finding the Life of their Right Hand, are not grieved: Whereas, a Saint's main Trouble flows from the Baseness and Vileness of Sin, which by the Lord's Kindness appears more than ever, and hence he has greater Mourning, *Zec.* xii. 10. *(6.)* It is only on Christ and his Merits, in temporal Things the Lord is only look'd unto; *In vain is Salvation looked for from the Hills*; the Lord only, and none else, and therefore his Power and Wisdom, Faithfulness and Goodness is looked unto. *Put not your Trust in Princes*: Happy is the Man *who hath the God of* Jacob *for his Refuge.* Whereas a carnal Man hath some *broken Reed* to lean on, some Cistern or other which he puts in Ballance with God, lippens to both alike. In Spirituals, a Saint can strip himself of all Gifts, Parts, Duties and Graces, and say, *I am but an unprofitable Servant*, these are but *Loss and Dung*, I value them not, I am not hereby justified, tho' I judge not my self, God may damn me for all this, *all our Righteousness is like rotten Rags*; and therefore, in these, abstractly considered, he puts no Confidence, looks only to the Lord, and puts his Mouth in the Dust, and saith, Now, if the good Lord look not upon me in the Multitude

of

of his tender Mercies, and for the Lord Jesus Sake his Son, I am undone for ever: This a Hypocrite cannot do, he never believes it; believes it, 'tis hard to do any Thing, and not let the right Hand know what the Left is doing: The Hypocrite will never give over spying some Worth in his Performances, for which he cannot but imagine to himself a Recompence from the Lord: Hence, *why have we fasted, and thou regardest not?* Hence, when quickened in Duty, glad; why the Lord sees this; 'tis a Thing can never enter in his Head, damn'd after all this Pains, after all their Frames, after all these Steps of Providence: I tell you, if the Lord ever save thee, he will stain the Glory of all Things, and make you fling away these Things of Gold and of Silver; it must be done, or else Christ cannot mount in the Throne.

THE 4th Thing I promised was some Cautions, or Rules in our trusting or depending, and I shall give these six shortly. (1.) Do not think that an adulterous Heart shall get any Thing from the Lord; if thy Heart be not honest for the Lord; if thou hast not opened *the everlasting Doors* to him, and to him only; if *the Desire of thy Soul be not towards him*; if he be not thy *Portion*, thy

all in all; if thy whole Soul be not bestowed upon him; if he be not *the rejoicing of thy Heart*, thy only Comfort, thy Love, thy Delight, *thine Inheritance, thine exceeding Joy, thy Fear, and thy Dread*; if thou hast not willingly, and chearfully said with *David, Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and who is it on Earth, I desire besides thee?* Then I tell thee, thou canst not expect any Thing comfortably from the Lord. *Jam.* i. 8, *Psal.* lxvi. 18. (2.) Look that ye deceive not your selves, in trusting to the Lord for any unlawful Thing, for any Thing not warranted to you to trust for in his Word, for any Thing, tho' good in it self, that if obtained, will be but Fewel unto your Lusts; for any Thing that would obscure his Glory. 1 *Joh.* v. 14. *Jam.* iv. 3. *Ye ask amiss to consume it upon your Lusts*; and therefore, it must be according to his Will; when thou hast sinned a great Sin, hast not, cannot repent, a Judgment is threatned, ye cannot with Confidence deprecate that Judgment; because, the Lord hath the Glory of his Holiness to show, and Justice, and a Mercy to an unhumbled Heart would be a Curse; But, *First*, Look up to Heaven for a Spirit of Brokenness and Mourning. (3.) Do not limit God, as to the Time, Manner,

Manner, and Measure of the Mercy depended on: For as the Lord is faithful, so is he sovereign, and this he shows, in reserving the Time of performing it; and therefore, ye have need of Patience, after embracing of the Promise, neither must ye expect it in the same Measure and Manner, as ye would have it, but as the Wisdom of God shall think fit. 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. (4.) Do not think to obtain any Thing without Pains, altho' God give his Promise and Gifts freely, yet he will have us use Means for obtaining of them: *If thou hast any Thing without Pains in Duties prescribed by God, you may fear that they are the last Visits of a Never to return Lord again*; Do not think thou hast done thy Work, when thou hast believed the Promise, or depended; no, *the Lord must be enquired for this Thing of the House of* Israel; when *Daniel* knew that the seventy Weeks were determined, he then addresses himself to Prayer. *Dan.* ix. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 37. *Hence chosen through Sanctification and Belief of the Truth.* (5.) Do not think the Lord will evermore give thee the very Thing thou trusts him for, he may give it thee in Penny worth, and so thou shalt not lose; thou prays, trusts for the removing of such a Sin, such an Affliction: No,

No, saith the Lord, Till thou be more humbled under it, kythe more Patience and Faith in it; here is thy Requeſt granted in Penny-worth, when there is Strength given to be humbled under Sin, and to bear the Croſs; thou prays for ſuch a temporal Mercy, thou finds it not in the Creature, was there Faith here? yes, Is God faithful? Yes, for he hath given thee the Mercy in himſelf pure, and from the very Fountain, as we ſpeak, tho' not in the Pitcher or Ciſtern, thou waſt ſeeking ſuch a Mercy to comfort thee, was it? Lo, Comfort in the Lord, flowing, and ſpringing up abundantly, as thy Afflictions do abound; Was it to honour the Lord, that thou ſought? Behold, thou honours the Lord as much in a patient, chearful bearing of the Croſs, *my Grace is ſufficient for thee*; and thus thy Good, and his Faithfulneſs is preſerved, and what wouldſt thou more? if his Glory require the Performance of a temporal Promiſe, thou may aſſure thy ſelf of it, *if the Viſion fail.* Oh mourn! thou haſt provoked the Lord in puniſhing of thee, to cauſe his own Name to be blaſphemed, and to be evil ſpoken of; the Lord in a Manner is neceſſitated to it, (with Reverence be it ſpoken) for to ſhow his Holineſs,

and

and this makes him give the dearly beloved of his Soul unto the Enemy: Thy Wants are many, Oh! I say mourn for this, and never give the Lord rest, till he pour out a Spirit of Repentance upon thee, and then the Lord will arise. (6.) Do not think ye want Faith, because it is mixed with Doubting and Fear, and because Unbelief gets Word about with it; *I am cut off*; *I will look up*, saith *Jonah*, *Jona.* ii. *Jer.* xxxix. 17, 18. The Eunuch *Ebedmelech* is afraid, and yet he puts his Trust in the Lord, for Delivery from them of whom he is afraid; this argues little Faith, but it doth not argue no Faith at all: And the Lord will own it as trusting on him, which shall not want its Reward; *because, thou hast trusted on me.*

THE fifth and last Thing was some Motives and Considerations to press this Duty upon Christians especially: I shall name these few, (1.) This is a Duty commanded by God to all, and at all Times, as I have proved formerly; *Trust in the Lord at all Times:* And therefore, because commanded, do it. This is a Warrant to thee, and therefore fear not to presume. (2.) The Lord is much displeased at Hypocrites for not trusting on him: This was it that made

Six

Six hundred thousand Mens Carcases *lie in the Wilderness*, and makes thee *consume thy Days in Vanity*, Psal. lxxviii. 22, 23. *If ye do not believe, ye shall not be established.* This is a Breach of a Command; this denies the Honour of his Power, Love, Faithfulness and Goodness, when thou darest not adventure on his Word, on his Goodness; nay I am perswaded this keeps many *from entring in into their Rest*, when there is a Promise given of entring in. Oh! therefore, grieve not the Lord with thy Unbelief; add not this to all your Sins. (3.) The Lord is much pleased with this, so as he commands it, commands it frequently, threatens the Neglecters of it with sore Punishments, presses it earnestly, gives large Promises to it; the very Desires of thy Heart should be hereby fulfilled. Oh then believe, to please the Lord, to glorifie him; consider these Two Passages, *Numb.* xx. 12. *Ye believe not to sanctifie me. Rom.* iv. 20. *Strong in Faith, giving Glory to God*: And no Wonder; *There is no Confidence in the Arm of Flesh.* (4.) This will help you to exceeding much Joy and Comfort, even in the Use of all Things, even when ye want all Things; *tho' the Fig-Tree should not blossom, and there be no Fruit in the Vine, Hab.* iii. 17, 18, 19. Nay, when the

the Promise is not actually performed, they can rejoice in the Expectation thereof, *Heb.* xi. 13, 39. For Faith sees the Vision coming, rejoices in the Lord, and delights it self in him *with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory*, 1 Peter i. 8. even tho' ye have not seen. This will give great Quietness and Security, *My Flesh and my Heart rejoices, and shall rest in Hope*, Psal. xvi. 7. (5.) This will help thee to rejoice much in the Performance of the Promise; a Draught of cold Water will be exceeding welcome, when coming through Faith, when stamped with the Love, Power, Faithfulness, and Good-will of God. Oh! how many Mercies do we receive, which are as the *White of an Egg*, that possibly thou hast pray'd for; and yet no Comfort, no Sweetness: Oh! they come not through a Promise; they are ordinary Mercies common to Good and Bad: *I trusted in him, and was helped; therefore my Soul rejoices*, Psal. xxviii 7. *This shall fill thy Mouth with Praise, and with my Song will I praise him:* It helps Prayer; therefore *hath thy Servant found in his Heart to make this Prayer unto thee.* This will help thee to trust more in the Lord, trusting further trusting, this will keep the Soul from needless Questions, carking Cares, and unpro-

profitable Diſquietment, which pines the Fleſh of ſome: *I will lay me down, and quietly ſleep; for the Lord ſuſtaineth me.* He is now built on a Rock; this will give much eſtabliſhing in Grace, *Unleſs ye believe, ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.* It furthers Sanctification, whereby ye are made *Partakers of the Divine Nature.* (6.) This is the Life of the Saints that were before us, are, or ſhall be; this was their conſtant Trade; *The Juſt ſhall live by his Faith:* Look to them, *Heb.* xi. and ye ſhall find that Faith was their Attorney-General, that which performed all Things for them; they ſubdued Sin by this, they rejoiced in this, pleaſed God by this, diſdained the *Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon,* condemned the World, lived in Heaven, yea Faith did all Things for them.

MEDITATION II.

Hungring and Thirſting after Chriſt.

FOR the better uptaking of this, ye ſhall conſider theſe Things in it, (1.) A Knowledge of Want, and a Knowledge of Miſery: They

They are not like luke-warm *Laodicea*, which thought she was *rich*, and *increased in all Things*; and yet was *poor*, *miserable*, *blind*, *and naked*: And it is not only a Knowledge of this, but a Sense and extreme Need. Oh! many know their Wants, and complain of them, but they are not duly sensible of them: He that is in a Fever, wants Meat; but he is not sensible, hath not an Appetite for Meat, and therefore never earnestly cries for it; loathes it when it is brought him: 'Tis like a Man fighting, who receives Wounds, and while he is hot, they never trouble him, and therefore fights on; but when he is in cold Blood, his Wounds pain him, and therefore sends for a Chyrurgeon: Why? He cannot live without him. So many a Soul wants Pardon of Sin, mortifying Grace, Peace, Joy and Comfort in God, and they know it likewise: But here is their Misery, they are not sensible of this infinite Evil, but go unsensibly under their Loads and Burdens, walk up and down, when Death is upon them, but they feel nothing, and hence fear nothing. Oh! this is the Plague of the World. (2.) Unsatisfaction under Sense of the absent Good. Bring Gold, Silver, and Honour to an hungry Man, he could not be content; he would esteem a

Crust

Crust of brown Bread more than all this. What doth all this to me, seeing in a few Hours I must starve? *What doth my Birthright to me?* saith *Esau*, when he was ready to perish for Hunger. A poor Soul which is loadned with Sin, Wrath and Hell, cries, Alas! what do Friends, Comforts, Estate, Honour, and all to me, when I want a holy, merciful Christ, a Christ, to wash my polluted Soul, a Christ, to make Peace with the Father, a Christ, to go betwixt me and Hell; see it in *David*, *As the Hart panteth after the Water-Brooks, so doth my Soul after thee.* What? Cannot a Kingdom, Honour, Pleasures of Court, and other Comforts satisfie? No; for I thirst after a Living God: And therefore Tears, with which his Soul is poured forth, must go Day and Night, and Down-casting, *Psal.* xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4. If thou knows thou wants Christ, and his Presence, but dost not mourn and lament after him, nor never breaks thy Night-Sleep for the Matter, never seeks him in painful Duties, and that for a long Time, but canst live without him Days, Months and Years, canst take Comfort in eating, drinking, and vain Company; thou dost not, nor never didst thirst after the Lord, and shalt never find him with a few Crocodile Tears, extorted

torted Cries, shortned Wishes, seeing thy Ease is more esteemed by thee than he is, thy Honour, thy Credit, thy Reputation, *Joh.* v. 40. (3.) Hence the longer the Soul wants, the more it is unsatisfied: This Hunger is a growing Hunger, 'tis fainting; and if God look not on the Soul, it is becoming like unto those that *go down to the Pit*: Some have Desires for a while, some Flashes, and therefore they cry, *Lord, evermore give us this Bread*; but at last give over, and take Comfort elsewhere, seeing God will give none; and they wear out of this Fit, whereas the People of God are more and more tormented, more hungry, more thirsty; as an hungry Man, the longer he fasts, the more hungry he is. (4.) There is great prizing and Esteem of the Thing longed for; Nothing to *David* but *a Living God*, and *none in Heaven or in Earth besides him*; he was *his Portion*, all he *desired*, and all he *sought for*. To every Believer Christ is precious, precious because felt, and known formerly; so that there remains a Smack of it in the Mouth, that makes it cry for the *Living Water*: A little *Myrrhe* dropped from *the Beloved*, carried the Spouse through all the City after him. Some cunning Men tell, that there is an Herb, which,

if a Man carry in his Hand, any Woman he pleaſes will follow him: Chriſt hath all that may gain a Heart, and he can make Devils love and follow him, if once they ſmelt the Savour of his good Ointments: Chriſt is precious, becauſe ſo in himſelf, becauſe there is my Chriſt; my Lord is ſweet, becauſe ſuitable and convenient to the Soul-maladies. A Man that is painfully ſick, deſires to hear, to ſee and ſpeak with none ſo much as with the Phyſician.

Signs of Hungring and Thirſting. (1.) He cares little for any Thing elſe; all is but *Loſs and Dung*: What is my Birthright, ſeeing I periſh for Hunger? What is my Wife, Children, Friends, ſeeing I want Chriſt? I want Holineſs & Peace with God, & am vile in God's Sight; I mean, he can receive no Comfort in them: *Rachel weeped for her Children, and would not be comforted, becauſe they were not.* All are like the White of an Egg, becauſe it hath no Taſte; and therefore it ſtill cries out, *They have taken away my Lord, they have taken away my God*; and what ſhall I do or ſay? Nothing can ſatisfie a hungry Man, but Meat, a thirſty Man, but Drink, an ambitious Man, but Honour, a covetous Man, but Wealth, an Epicure, but Meat, Drink, and Pleaſure: *Haman* ſaid, *What is all*

all this Honour to me, seeing I see Mordecai *living?* Because of a Spirit in them that cries evermore, *Give, give*; so nothing will satisfie a Christless Man, struck with the Sense of Sin, Wrath and Misery, but a Christ; and therefore till they get him, they cry, *Give, give.* Hence Duties, tho' performed with some Life, satisfy not; why? This is not Christ, this will not please God, this will not make up the Peace, this is but Loss and Dung. (*2d Sign.*) When any course Meat is sweet, it is a Token of Hunger; we have a common Proverb, *Hunger is good Kitchen, or Sauce*; a Piece of brown coarse Bread is sweet to a hungry Man: Horse, Dogs, Mice, young Children are thought good Meat in a strait Siege: Any Sermon, if it speaks of Christ, is prized: Any Crumbs pickt from Scripture, are welcome: The Soul cares not much how Christ is drest, with what Table-clothes this Childrens Bread is served in, or how much, or how neatly delivered. Oh! I fear there is but little prizing of Christ; now nothing but able Men, or else no hearing; high-flown Notions of Christ, and some fine Notions of Scriptures, else he is but a cold Preacher, and they are wearied ere the tedious Sermon be half done. *David* sought no more, but to be a *Door-keeper:*

The poor ſtarved Prodigal ſeeks no more, if better cannot be got, but to be as an *hired Servant. I am the leaſt of all thy Mercies.* The *Woman of Canaan* was content with Crumbs. (3.) No Pains will be ſpared; ye will be uſing of all Means, from Sermon to Sermon, from Prayer to Prayer. Any Occaſion of meeting with Chriſt is comfortable. Oh! it may be he will once come: *Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedeſt,* tho' I ſhould ſpend my Travel. *Jacob* endured much for *Rachel:* A Thief that is hungry will venture his Neck for Meat, and will give any Thing for it; ſo a Soul hungring and thirſting for Chriſt will ſpare nothing for him. The Fleſh objects, Oh! 'tis hard travelling to him; but I muſt have him, or elſe I am undone; ye will loſe your Honour and Credit with the World, that is nothing, or if it be, I muſt have Chriſt: If there be no other Terms, there are ſuch Boſom-Devils thou muſt quit; what avails all to me, when I want the Lord Chriſt? But there are many Difficulties in the Way, much Wearineſs to the Fleſh, praying, meditating, ſtriving, watching, waiting, and may be for a long Time denying of all Things; that is nothing: Let me have this Pearl, I will ſell all that I have:

But

But Oh! see the great Contempt under which Christ lies. Oh! who thinks him worth their Lusts? who thinks him worth their Pains, or worth the seeking? For tell them, they want Christ, they will not believe it: Convince them, they will bestow some little Pains to find him; some few wishes, when they are in a good Frame, some good Works on the Sabbath-day, Abstinence from some outward Vices, for Shame of the World, or because they are not much inclined to them, but no more. Oh! remember ye shall never have Christ on these Terms; remember the Man that waited Thirty eight Years: *The violent take the Kingdom of Heaven.* He who says that he loves, desires, longs after Christ, yet loves his Queans, his Cups, his Righteousness and Duties, his Pride, his Credit or his Ease, his Pleasures, as he will not quit them for Christ, *is a Liar, and the Truth is not in him:* Nay I will say that hungring after Christ will make all Pains, Cost, and Travel easie and sweet, as *Jacob* thought all but a small thing for *Rachel.* (4.) It is Christ principally, or God in Christ, as theirs, as the Father, Husband, Friend. Take a profane Man, that which he longs most for, is how to sin against God, and to get into bad Company, a covetous

Man for Money, a proud Man for Honour and Reſpect, an adulterous leacherous Perſon to ſatisfie his Luſt. The more Civil ſeek the lawful Comforts of this Life, and without this there is no Living: The convinced Sinner, and Peacock Hypocrite and Phariſee, a well ſet up Duty; for this is his God and Chriſt, which will win him Heaven, and theſe he lives upon. Take a guilty Sinner purſued with Wrath and Death, he muſt have Peace of Conſcience by any Means. *Laſtly*, if a Soul be wounded under Senſe of the Want of Chriſt, nothing but Chriſt will ſatisfie; nay, Duties are but Phyſicians of no Value; it is for God that *David* longs.

Hindrances are, (1.) WANT of the Knowledge of our Neceſſities; many are like poor *Laodicea*, who ſaid, *I am rich, and lack nothing*: The blind World know not their Neceſſity, know not that they are blind, are vile, and ugly in the Lord's ſight; know not that they are bound Hand and Foot under the Power of Sin and Satan, under the Curſe of the Law, and Wrath of God, and of this ye ſhall never convince them; Chriſt found it a hard Matter to convince the *Jews* of this: Many have Duties and falſe Hopes, that is not only a Cover from Men, but from themſelves, and there-

therefore never believe that they are full of Rottenneſs and Uncleanneſs within. (2.) If they know their own Miſery, yet they never know the Excellency of the Thing they wanted; there is a Veil over the Eyes, and tho' Chriſt be excellent, and worth all the World, and the Delight of the Father, and the Glory of the Heavens, yet they ſee no Beauty in him for which he ſhould be deſired: God hath not given them Eyes to ſee, and therefore Chriſt's Communion and Fellowſhip with him, Peace of Conſcience and Sanctification are ſlighted. *Ignoti nulla cupido; If thou kneweſt the Gift of God, and who it is that ſaith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldeſt have asked, and he would have given thee living Water.* Chriſt therefore cries up his Wares, *Waters of Life, fine Gold tried in the Furnace, Honey, Wine, Milk, Raiment.* (3.) The World, like ſo many Thorns, choak their Deſires juſt in the Bud, when their Stomachs are empty, theſe fill them and intoxicate them; ſo that if they have any Deſires, they do not laſt long; Why? their Natures never being changed, nor mortified to theſe Things, hence their Life is ſatisfied with theſe Things; and tho' this cannot ſatisfy their Conſcience, yet it contents their Heart,

and hence there is no Peace within till ſome Duty be caſt in this crying Dog's Mouth, or elſe in Proceſs of Time it becomes dead. Who are theſe that will not have the Fear of the Lord, theſe to whom God hath dealt abundantly; Oxen, Farms, and Wife keep Folk from coming when they are invited; we are Lords, and therefore we will not come unto thee. While *Iſrael* was in the Wilderneſs, and when God ſlew them, they ſought unto him; but when they grew fat, then they forgot God: I tell you, if God will ſave you, he will either break theſe Idols in Pieces, or elſe ſend ſuch a Storm upon Conſcience, that all the World ſhall not quiet and calm, nay nor Duties either, that ſhall make thee caſt away thy Jewels of Gold and of Silver; hence, I will leave in the Midſt of thee a poor and an afflicted People. (4.) Becauſe of Unbelief and Diſcouragements they think in their Hearts, That tho' they ſhould take never ſo much Pains, frequent never ſo many Sermons, yet that God will not regard them; nay, tho' they ſhould thirſt after it, yet that it ſhould not be; and therefore never trouble their Heads with it. Many would deſire a Crown, the Gold of *India*, Honour and Riches; yet they

they think, tho' they do they will be no better, and therefore trouble not themselves with it: Hence, if their Wants be great, like *Achab*, they will ly upon their Beds, and be sorrowful unto Death; and the Reason is, *There is no Hope, we have loved Idols, and after them will we go:* Hence a continual Sighing and going backward. And truly Hope adds Strength and Wings to the Soul. I grant, *Hope deferr'd makes the Heart sick*; but where there is no Hope at all, the Heart is struck dead. *I faint for thy Salvation*, saith *David*, *and I hope in thy Word.* And hence it comes to pass, that there are no powerful Endeavours used; Why? Because it is in vain to serve God. I know many a Heart prizes Christ, Life, Glory, Grace, Why do they not thirst after it? truly here is it, they think they shall never obtain it, partly through the Greatness of the Mercy, their own Unworthiness, Unfitness, long Delays, present Troubles, and multiplied Objections of Reason and Sense, many vain Attempts in former Times: Oh! beware of Unbelief. (5.) Because of false Hopes, and sometimes it comes to pass, that Men after long Fasting gather Wind in their Stomach, and this doth fill their Stomach, so as they have no great Appetite

Appetite for Meat; now, ſo it is with many a Man that is like to ſtarve for want of Chriſt, and Heaven, and Glory, and hath ſome hungring and thirſting after him for a while; and therefore put forth ſome powerful Endeavours after him, till their Stomach gather Wind, on which, as *Ephraim*, they feed: And theſe are nothing elſe but ſome falſe Hopes which Souls enjoy, which doth quiet their Conſcience, and the World ſatisfies, and rejoices their Hearts; which Hopes come from ſome miſapplied Promiſes, partly from the unſeaſonable Thoughts of God's Goodneſs and Mercy, partly from the Diſpoſition of their own Hearts, which they think are growing better: Now, nothing in the World argues a graceleſs formal Heart more than this; for I grant, Hopes can quiet and calm under the Want of an abſent Good, but they cannot ſatisfy; tell a hungry Man, that within a few Hours he ſhall have Meat, ye comfort him indeed, but ye do not ſatisfy his Hunger nor his Appetite, which is ſtill crying: If a Man be truly hungry after Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs, give him Honour, Pleaſures and Riches, what is that to him, that doth not ſatisfy at all; give him ſome Enlargements and Heart-

diſpo-

dispositions, which are a formal Pharisee's God, you satisfy but the least Part of his Desire; indeed this gives some Hope that the Rooms are made ready for Christ, and therefore he may come; and these are some of Christ's Forerunners, and it looks as he were on his Way and March, but the Soul is still fainting and hungring for Christ, altho' these Table-cloaths be laid down: But it was never Christ himself that a Hypocrite thirsts after; for otherwise how are they satisfy'd with any Thing else besides, whether with Performances, Enlargements, and Dispositions, and when they have these, they fix down their Stake, and will go no further at all; till they want them again; but it was the Fear of Hell, of the eschewing of which, a little painted Grace, which now and then they receive, are an Evidence, and for their Comfort the World supplies that. (6.) Want of the New Nature; some such Folk, tho' they be told they want Meat, and that they are undone without it, yet cannot desire it; for they have no Appetite, they are under a Distemper, and they have no Taste: Hence Christ's Promises are like the White of an Egg, unsavoury and vile; Why? because there is no new Nature in the Soul, or

Taste

Taſte to reliſh ſpiritual Things; for the natural Man cannot reliſh or receive him. Many want Chriſt who is *precious*, and more excellent than the Mountains of Prey, yet they are not troubled; Oh! here is their Miſery, there is not a ſpiritual Man form'd within them which deſires, or cannot live without this; but a Carnal, which ſometimes is diſquieted with Thoughts of Hell, and God's Wrath and Judgment, which doth not argue a new Nature; for a Devil may have this, and every ſenſitive Creature hath it which deſires its own Preſervation, and ſhuns and fears its Deſtruction: and I think, none of theſe would be troubled for the Want of God, if there were not an Hell, or Devil to torment them. Oh! try your ſelves by this, Ye are troubled now and then under Chriſt's Abſence; here is it, How ſhall I know whether it be Chriſt I thirſt after, or Quietneſs of Conſcience, or Security from Hell? Know it by this, When thou finds any Thing that appears as an Evidence to thee of Grace, or that gives Hope of ſome more; if then thou run away ſatisfied, and incontinently thy Deſires and Endeavours are ſlackened, the Reaſon is moſt manifeſt,

these are thy Gods, because thou rests here; for every Thing rests in its Center, that is a Man's End in the Attainment of which he doth rest: A Man loves Money because of its Value and Significancy; so many Love Christ, because he signifies Heaven: A Man cannot desire Straw, nor Grass; nor an Horse Gold, or Silver, or Honour; because his Nature is not suited to this. So here.

MEDITATION III.

Some useful Considerations for raising our Esteem, Love and Desire after Christ, under Deadness and Desertions; or to quicken the Soul in its Motions after the Lord of Glory, especially to the Saints.

Consider 1. Who it is that thy Soul wants, and whom it doth pursue; it is not a Shadow, a Vanity, or a Trifle, or Thing of nought, a perishing fading Flower that cannot satisfy, which takes Wings and

and flies away, which is the Idol the World doth fondly pursue: No, no; it is a more excellent Object; it is the Son of God, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, to whom is given all Power in Heaven and in Earth, and who doth command, rule, govern, punish, and reward all Nations, doing whatsoever pleaseth him, and who shall one Day judge the World, and come in such an amazing Glory, that the Saints shall be drown'd in an eternal Admiration of him, out of which they shall never recover themselves, but shall be swallow'd up of this incomprehensible Glory; whose Majesty shall make all the Earth *mourn and wail because of him*, who is Almighty, that with his Rebuke drieth up the Seas, and with his Look drives asunder the Mountains; who is the Joy, Wonder, and Glory of Heaven; the Light, that serves instead of Sun, and Moon, in whom is no Darkness at all; nay, who is the eternal and everlasting Delight of the Father, *the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person*; the Fountain, Spring, and Root of all Beauty and Excellency; the Sea of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all Things, from whence all Springs of Happiness doth come, and to which

which they run: Christ is the Fountain and Pipe, thro' which all the Father's Goodness is convey'd to us; here is he whom I would press you to love, to admire, to long for and esteem; who alone can enrich you, and without whom nothing can; who is a perfect, sure, pure, satisfying, and everlasting Good.

Consid. 2. Christ is a most suitable fitted Object for thee, it is not always that which is best in it self, that is best for thee; but that which is most suitable to thee: Tho' Christ were never so excellent in himself; yet if he were not fitted, and apt to thee, he could not be best for thee: Gold and precious Stones, are indeed in themselves excellent, but a Draught of cold Water may be better for a thirsty Man, and is welcomer: But Christ is not only excellent in himself, but most proportioned, and suitable unto thee; try all the Comforts in the World, and none will suit thee so well as Christ; and therefore, above all the World thou should desire him. Now Christ is suitable, *First*, In Respect of Similitude, and Congruity of Natures, thy Soul is spiritual; and therefore, no temporal Good can satisfy, all is Vanity and Vexation; hence it is, those who enjoyed

joyed most of the World, complain'd most of it; I grant, it did satisfy their sensual Appetites, but there was Something that it could not satisfy: *Solomon* can give a large Proof of this; and the Conclusion will be, *The Eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the Ear with hearing:* But Christ is a most satisfying Object, I have enough, since *mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation: Thou art my Portion, I shall not want:* He is all unto them, there is not an empty Vacuity, or Voidness in all the Soul, but Christ can fill; wouldest thou have thy Understanding enlighten'd, he is a Light unto his People, and Eyes to the Blind; wouldest thou have thy Admiration satisfied, thy Joy, thy Delight, so drinking, as it should never thirst again: Oh! come to Jesus Christ, who is the Father's Delight, in whom he is well pleased. Wouldest thou have thy Ambition satisfied, which thy Condition now cannot possibly do, nor all the World. Oh! come and be honoured of God; come, and give thy self unto Christ, Heart and Hand; *and doth it seem a small Thing unto you to be the Kings Son-in-law?* Is it a small Thing to triumph with him in high Places, over Sin, Death, Satan, and all the World? Is it a small Thing to judge

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the World, to be cloathed with Glory, to be an everlasting Courtier with God, and to have his Ear, his Love, his Care, his Pity, his Compassion? Dost thou want Holiness? and is not thy Complaint mainly of a polluted, whorish, deceitful, unkind, ungrate Heart? Oh! *here is a Fountain opened to the House of* David, *for Sin, and for Uncleanness*, whose Blood cleanseth from dead Works, and who is our Sanctification; wants thou Knowledge, and Understanding? he hath Eye-salve; Art thou poor? he hath Gold tried in the Furnace; Art thou naked? he hath Cloathing; Art thou pursued with Wrath? Art thou grieved, vexed, and cast down at the Unfaithfulness, Hardness, and Deceitfulness of Friends; so that thou cries; *The Goodman is perished from the Earth*; and there is no Confidence in a Brother? Oh! come here, and have a loving, compassionate, faithful, powerful, and honourable Friend. Art thou wearied with the World, and canst find no Cluster to eat, hast *gone through dry Places seeking Rest, but finding none*? Oh! Come here poor wearied Soul, and thou shalt find Rest to thy Soul.

Confid. 3. What is it to have all these as thine? to say, *My Beloved is mine, and I*

am his; many can receive Comfort from Things that are not their own, as from Persons; they may be refresht with their Discourse, tho' they never have an Interest of Marriage, or any other Way. If I might see a pleasant House, and Lands furnished with all other Accomodations, as Rivers, Groves, Walks; yet if I cannot have it to be mine, it is not very comfortable unto me; I cannot have the Use, Profit, nor continual Recourse to, and using of it: Oh! but (*my*) is a sweetning Word, a loving, ravishing, Heart raising, and gaining Word: *My Beloved is mine, and I am his: O Lord, thou art my God, early will I seek thee*; what tho' thou shouldst fill thy Head with all the Mysteries and Notions of Christ imaginable; what tho' thou shouldst smell all his Ointment, and see this Beauty of the Star of Jacob, and taste the Fruit of the Stem of Jesse; yet, if this be not thine, what avails it unto thee; woe, woe, unto thee for evermore, that hast nothing but Discoveries of Christ, some Reasonings anent him, with which the Head is only fill'd, and the Affections a little tickled, and never canst say, That *the Beloved is thine*; Who canst foolishly, basely, and flatteringly commend

mend this Pearl of Price, and weigh the Worth and Weight of it with thy Reason; but never sell all to make it thine own. If Christ be not thine; if he be not thy Husband, thy Love, thy Friend, thy All in All, thy Portion, thy Delight; all thy Knowledge will avail nothing, make him thine, and then all his is thine: As he that marries a rich Heretrix, all falls in unto him; so here; *Because I live, ye shall live also*; all the Grace, Glory, Righteousness, Power, Honour, Life, Victory, Love, and Favour of God that Christ hath, all is thine; nay, tho' thou feelest nothing by Sense, yet ye have all in him, *in whom we are complete, Triumph with him in high Places*, be blessed with him in high Places, be dead with him, *and his Grace is sufficient for us*, tho' *a Messenger of Satan buffet, and we pray that it depart*, and yet no Answer; and therefore, let every Man glory in the Lord: If thou make the Lord thine, thou may command him for thy Good when thou pleasest; concerning the Works of my Hand, command thou me, thou may'st do this as often, as much, and as long as you please; thou may'st make bold with all that Christ hath, even so far, as his Life, Blood, Power, Grace, Love, and

Good-will can extend to. There is a blank Bill of Exchange drawn upon Christ, a blank Obligation, and Christ is to answer all; ask what ye will, not only to the Half of his Kingdom, but the Whole of his Kingdom, and ye shall have it; and not only that, but his Heart-blood. O! ye Fools, seize quickly upon all this Treasure, your Will and Consent makes them yours, ye have them for the asking, and for less; the Market may arise quickly, and that which very little would do, Ten thousand Worlds shall be offered for it, and it shall not do: If ye neglect this Time of rich reaping, when he calls; Groans, seeking him early, Tears, and all will not fetch him: Oh! therefore make him yours, so as ye may be eternally, and at your Will enriched herewith: Indeed, if Christ served you for no other Use, than to be gazed upon like some beautiful Picture, or to give thee sometimes Satisfaction and Content, and then away again, to be as a Stranger tarrying but for a Night; I confess there would be much less Occasion for thee to prize, seek, thirst, and long after him for, or grieve in his Absence: Oh! but not only is Christ departed, but your Christ is gone; not only has *the Be-*

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loved withdrawn himself, but my Beloved hath withdrawn himself: If a rich Ship with all its Commodities, should split, or be cast away, if thou hast no Share in it; tho' thou mightest possibly expect to have some of the Commodities for thine own Use, thou could'st not be so much troubled as the Mariner and Persons to whom the Ship and Goods did belong; so it is here, tho' thou mightest possibly expect some Advantage in retaining Christ; yet if he were but as a Stranger to thee, and thou hadst no other Interest in him, thou mightst be somewhat satisfied. But oh! thy Christ, thy Beloved; *my Lord is taken away*, mine own, I am robbed of him; and canst thou live without him: Let Devils and damned Reprobates never sigh for Want of Christ, who was never theirs; But oh! ye Saints, how can ye live Days, Months, and Years, without Christ, your Lord, your God, your Life: Ye unconverted Persons, how can ye want him, who may be yours? To lose a Thing not mine, troubles me not, but to lose mine own, grips to me.

Confid. 4. Thou hast not only a Relation in him, and Interest in him, but thou hast, or mayest have the nearest Relation to him, and Union that is imaginable: Oh!

ye People and Saints of God, Let us consider who it is we want: Our Brother, our Father, our God, our Lord, our King, our Head, our dear, loving, honourable, faithful, and worthy Friend: It would be a sad Parting that would be betwixt a Woman, her Husband, her Children, all her good Friends; now Christ is all comfortable Relations to his People; boundless Love, and rich Grace was not content to befriend poor Sinners, and to bring them to Heaven, and there to have some Fellowship with God, (tho' that was much) but to make himself theirs, and to give them a Right of Donation to Jesus Christ, without Reversion; and not only to make him theirs, but warm, and violent Love did creep nearer Sinners, and bring them, and knit them in the neareſt Tie, and Union, so as Christ gets the Sinner in his Heart ere all be done, and he incircles himself in the Sinners Arms. *Joh.* xvii. Oh! shame and fy upon unkind Sinners; Christ is not only content to keep Fellowship and Communion with his Brethren and Creatures, that *where I am, there they may be also*; but must marry them, and *betroth them unto himself in Mercy, Judgment, and loving Kindness*, and must make them *Members of his Body*, which

which Christ the Head will draw up unto himself after him in Heaven; so that this Union is our greatest Honour, Happiness and Pride, in which only we can boast; *Christ is yours, and Christ is God's, and all Things are yours*; he is all in us; all his is ours, all the Glory, Honour, Excellency of Christ, is the poor Sinners united to him by Faith; he is the **Stock**, and thou art the **Branch**, and what canst thou do, but wither, when cut off from him: He is thy **Husband, Brother, Friend, and Head**; and therefore, come up unto him, or else thou canst not do any Thing, but droop like a sorrowful Widow in his Absence: Oh! come to him; he calls thee, he longs for thee: Oh! ungrate and unthankful Generation, *do ye thus requite the Lord*? When *Jacob* heard these Words, *Thy Son* Joseph *calleth for thee*; It is said, *He made himself quickly ready to go down*: Oh! but thy Lord, and thy Love, and one joined to thee in the straitest Union calls for thee; and therefore, make haste to come: When Christ would be in, he saith, *Open my Love, my Dove, my undefiled One, my Spouse*: If thou wert to esteem and love a Stranger, you would seek him, long for him, and desire his Fellowship; but oh! thy **Husband**, thy **Head**, and all

thy comfortable Relations in one: Oh! hard, ungrate, fooliſh, and unwiſe Heart, and far from Underſtanding; Is he not the Half of thy ſelf, and the beſt Half? If thou haſt not this Intereſt in Chriſt as yet, as many have not; then make up for thy Life quickly, otherwiſe thou wilt live a Fool, and die a Begger, and be eternally undone for want of him. The Spouſe in *Hoſea* ii. ſaith, *It is my Husband, and therefore I will return*; ſo do thou; *Remember the Love of thine Eſpouſals*; know from whence thou haſt fallen, *whom ye ſerve, and whoſe ye are*; and therefore away with Ceremonies.

Conſid. 5. He hath not only been a Huſband, Friend, Brother and Father unto thee, but a kind, more than dutiful Huſband, and an exceeding loving Friend; *his Love is more than the Love of Women*; he did that which none durſt do; he hath the *Preheminence in every Thing*; he is a Non-ſuch; no ſuch Brother, Friend, Father, or Husband; none ſo kind, ſo great, ſo good as he; *God is Love*; there are ſome that can ſpeak fair to you, do you ſome Piece of Service, and that upon ſome ſelfiſh End, but their Hearts are not upright: Chriſt not only doth thee

good,

good, but all flows from Love; Christ had no By-end, he loved, and thought upon thee from Everlasting; his Love is as old as himself; he loved thee freely of his own accord; nothing did put a Necessity on Christ, he saw no great Advantage he had by it, thou didst never put him to it; who hath given and he shall be rewarded. Nay, he loved all his Saints, when they were Enemies, worthless, most vile in his Sight, which no Love can counter-ballance; when unable to help themselves, yea in the very Act of Resisting, *when thow walked frowardly on in thy Way:* Christ's Love is unchangable and constant, which neither Sin, Ingratitude, Worthlesness, Weakness, or Jealousy can change; it is without Repentance: When *Peter* in his own Presence denied him, he looked upon him, and that Look did shoot Darts of Love, it did make *Peter* weep bitterly: And some there are which love in Word, but not in Action, or in Deed; Christ loved in Heart and Action: Christ came down from Heaven, and he met with a Number of broken Men unable to recover themselves; Christ took on the Debt, and ware all he had, his Honour, his Pleasure, his Glory, his Father's Fellowship, *Phil.* ii. 3, 4. And

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when all would not do, he pawn'd and paid his Life, not by Constraint, but most willingly. Who will dare to die for a Righteous Person? but Christ dared to die for his Enemies. Christ saw all the Elect swimming in a Flood of Vengeance, and they were ready, like *Peter*, to sink; Christ waded through himself, and got many a sad Dowk ere he pull'd out his Lambs. If thou hast any Thing that is good, pleasant, or comfortable, Christ bought it, and sent it unto thee; He endured Scorn, Hunger, Thirst, cruel Mockings, Contradiction of Sinners for thy sake. There was a black and fearful Cup of pure and unmixed Vengeance prepared for thee, that would have made all the Angels reel and run mad, and this we behoved to drink; and the Dregs were Curses of the Almighty: Christ pitied, weeped, took up the Cup, and without more ado sipped it off. When all our Necks were upon the Block, and the Sword just ready to come down; Christ stept in and received the Blow. When Storms were blowing within and without, Christ rode Chin deep into the Sea, he remembred his Bride, and when he had done all, he thought all well wared; he saw the Travel of his Soul, and was satisfied; Christ never either before

fore or after repented his Bargain. Oh! *in him is your Help*, and can you refuſe any Thing to him? Will ye be like the Lepers, that after they were cured, never did ſo much as come and give him Thanks? Oh! Fooliſh and Unwiſe. What ſhould I tell other his Kindneſſes, it is he that preſerves thee, invited, exhorted, threatned, never left off after Denials, Sins, Unkindneſſes, till he conquered thy Heart, and he gave himſelf, his Heaven, his Love, his All for it. *I am thy exceeding rich Reward.* He pities, delivers, loves, cares for thee, provides for thee, *heals all thy Diſeaſes*; O cry out, how precious are thy Thoughts to us-ward, in Number they cannot be told; look to the Greatneſs, Multitude, Seaſon, Continuance of Mercies, and admire, wonder and love; Canſt thou then refuſe him this Heart of thine? Canſt thou then kick and ſpurn at this Love, and leave him to lament and grieve over your hard Hearts? Canſt thou, or wilt thou ſin any more againſt him? Wilt thou wound and pierce him any more with thy Iniquities and Unkindneſs? Wilt thou not render him but Love for Love? Art thou weary of him? Hath he been a barren Wilderneſs to thee? Oh! what Iniquity have ye found in the Lord?

Lord? testify against him, and plead thy Cause before the Mountains; Remember what he did unto thee, what others did unto thee, and wilt thou not come and live with this kind Friend, *this kind* Samaritan? Shall the World, which never did thee one good Turn, have thy Thoughts, Endeavours and Affections, and shall Christ stand without weary and wet, and wilt thou not give him Entertainment? Oh long for him, O cry, Where is he that I may thank him; O give thy whole self to him, who hath bought, and over-bought, and over-deserved thee; unless thou turn the most ungrate, foolish, unreasonable, unjust Man in the World; what remains then, that ye being delivered from all your Enemies, *serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of your Life.* Oh prize, esteem, and delight in him.

Consid. 6. He is thy Acquaintance, one with whom sometimes *you took sweet Counsel*, one whom sometimes thou hast seen and hadst Fellowship with: They that lament over those that are dead, remember all their Actions, their Familiarity, Love and Sayings betwixt them: Christ did not marry by Attorney or Proxy, he came himself, courted and married, kept House till he

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was made welcome, and till thou shut the Door upon him; if thou hadst not wearied of him, he would have staid still: Remember then, it is thy **Acquaintance, the Guide of thy Youth**; remember his former Carriage, remember his Missive Letter, remember the Days of old, and thy Song in the Night, when his Candle shined upon thy Tabernacle, when thou washed thy Steps in Butter, and never leave thy Heart until it say, I will up after my Husband, for then it was better with me than it is now; if it had been a Stranger that never would look upon thee, whom thou never saw, but only heard tell of, it would be some Excuse,; Oh! but to lose an acquainted God, to lose a kind Lord, a loving Lord, is sad.

Consid. 7. THE Lord is all unto thee, he is thy Portion, thou hast no other Thing allow'd thee to content and satisfy thy Soul, but himself alone; he is thy Physician, he is the Health of thy Countenance, he is your Gain, your Riches, your Heritage, and thy Portion; he is your Meat and Drink, and Cloathing; nay he is thy Soul and Life: so that thou art but a dead rotten Carcase without him, a sick weak Thing; he is thy Rock, thy Strength, thy Light,

Light, thy Wisdom, and thy Salvation; he is thy all in all, thy Sanctification, thy Glory and thy Honour: so that thou signifiest nothing without him but a meer Cypher: And therefore, as the Preacher desires young Men *to rejoice, eat and drink, for this is their Portion under the Sun*; so I say, love the Lord, delight in him, seek him, entertain him, for he is thy Portion, thou could'st not live one Hour without him. The Creatures could not yield thee one Drop of Comfort were it not he: All the Creatures are but subservient to him, when rightly improven, they are but Letters and Syllables to spell him; Mercies are but Tables on which the Wisdom, Power, Goodness and Love of God are written; Enlargements and Duties are but the Sail and the Ships, and Horse to carry us to Heaven: Outward Mercies are but as Trifles and Baubles to rub away our Wildness, and acquaint us more with him, to allure us to come to him: Promises are but fair Words to take off our Misconstructions of Christ, and to acquaint us with him, and to make us lay aside our Fear and take Courage. Outward Comforts, necessary Food and Raiment are but the Inns, and the Provision which God hath set in

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our Way for our better Accommodations; we must not rest, but to our Journey; a short Slumber, and away again. Ordinances are but Glasses and Opticks through which we may see the Lord of Glory, and to let in his Light, Cisterns, Pipes and Paps through which he Distils and we do suck himself; and if ye rest in, or upon these, ye are Christless, and pervert their Use. Nay, Grace it self is but the Raiment with which we must come in the King's Presence, and a Token of Christ's Love. Fall not in Love with any inferior Delight or Good, which the Lord of all Comfort and Good sends to court for himself; say not thou hast enough, when thou wants himself, for these are not thy Portion; sell not thy Heritage then, for the Devil's or the World's short worthless Trifles: Remember *Esau*. When thou wants the Lord himself, look upon thy self as wanting thy Heritage, thy Life, thy Light, thy Strength, thy Refuge, and thy all. Reprobates need not mourn much; or at least not so much as thou; for they have their Portion and their Reward: Oh! but thou hast not, till thou hast the Lord: And therefore, seeing the Lord is all unto thee, look for him, and seek him by all Means, and then your Souls shall live.

MEDI-

MEDITATION IV.

Shewing in what Cases the precedent Considerations may be useful.

IN the Time of Conversion, when the Lord is beginning to court the Soul for himself, and making Acquaintance; when he saith, Open thy Heart poor Sinner, and *I will come in and Sup with thee*; when Jesus Christ is bidding himself, Heaven and Glory, and when Christ and the Soul are communing for the *Pearl of Price*: when thou findest thy Heart draw back, and esteem Christ as an empty Sound: when he appears little to thine Eyes, and thine Heart begins secretly to draw off: Oh! then ply it hard with these Considerations, take up this Looking-glass, and take one View more of Jesus, and this may draw your Hearts and conquer you. When Christ would be in at the Spouse's Chamber, he saith, *Open my Love, my Dove, my undefiled*; Christ adjures by all the sweet Relations that is betwixt the Soul and him; Christ knew if

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any Thing would do, this would. It was *Job's* sad Complaint, *I am a Stranger unto my Wife; I besought her for the Fruit of my Body's sake.* Ah! many a Pledge of Love hath Christ besought, and adjured us by to let him in; when Wisdom is calling in, she saith, *All Things are ready, I will pour out my Spirit, and ye that want Understanding come:* Here are all the sweet Compellations that may endear. Oh! then say, Shall I contemn the glorious Son of God, *Him in whom the Father delighteth,* and shall not I give him my Heart? shall I refuse him that is so suitable unto all my Conditions? in whom I see all my Wants made up, both Meat and Drink; shall I refuse such a Bargain? shall I refuse him for my Husband? refuse to live with him that hath done so much for me? who will be all unto me: Oh! I cannot, I will not. (2.) In Times of Desertion, when the Soul hath run away from God, and gone after other Lovers than God, and begun to fag, when the Lord sends for the adulterous Soul, and saith, *Jer.* iii. 2. *Tho' thou hast played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord.* Oh say, Where am I? What is this that I have done? Foolish, ungrate and unreasonable; This is not

my Reſt, this is not my Husband: Then *remember the Love of thine Eſpouſals:* Oh then think upon his Kindneſs and Love, *Ezra* ix. 8, 9, 10, 11. And let the Thoughts of a firſt Husband draw thy Soul after him, *Hoſ.* ii. 5. and truly ye ſhall find this uſeful. (3.) When ye would affect the Soul with Sin, and thou canſt not, by reaſon of a hard, impenitent, cruel, blind and ungrate Heart: Oh then look upon him whom ye *have pierced*, and ſay, Oh! *I have offended thee, and in thy Sight done this Evil.* Nay, but Oh! it is againſt Kindneſs, Mercies, Covenant-Relations; have I combined againſt my Lord, and my King, and my beſt Friend, who is *All in All* unto me: My Husband, and my Love; and cannot I mourn? I have heard tell of one that fighting againſt a Friend in a diſguiſed Armour, when by a Wound given him, he diſcovered who it was, was almoſt at the Point of killing himſelf, becauſe he had harmed his Friend: Oh! but we let our Blows flie at Random, and know not that we wrong precious and meek Jeſus: It was a ſad Challenge, *Thou haſt lied unto God:* But Oh this; thou haſt ſinned againſt thy God, and thy good God, and thy God who never reſted till he drew thee to himſelf, and made thee one with

with himself, thy best and only Friend; it is him *thou hast pierced with thine Iniquities, Ezek.* xvi. 63. *Zach.* xii. Oh therefore mourn; it was a sad Thing to *David* to consider the Party against whom he sinned. *Psal.* l. 2. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this Evil in thy Sight:* Oh consider against whom hath thy Tumult come: *David* had a sad Word, *If it were mine Enemy, or a Stranger that had done it, then could I have born it; but it was thou my Friend, that eated my Bread, mine Acquaintance:* Oh methinks Christ is saying to the Sinners of his People, If it were the base carnal World, or Devils whom I never loved, nor ever intended good to, I could have born; but thou, for whom I thought nothing too good, my self, Life, Glory and Heaven; thou whom I have been acquainted with, nay, whom yet I cannot but love, and will love, thou that art married to me, thou to sin against me? *Tho'* Israel *transgress, yet let not* Judah *forsake the Lord her God.* Whoever do it, do ye not it. (4.) When the Lord is calling us to some special Duties, and when we find our Hearts draw back, and unwilling to engage, then allure them with these Considerations, What! refuse to do this for me, that have done so much for thee, who have deserved it so, and

over-deserved it? To me, who am thy Friend, thy Lord, and thy Husband; *Bone of thy Bone, and Flesh of thy Flesh?* For me, that refused not Contempt, Reproach, Shame, Buffeting, the Anger and Curse of God, who drank up Hell for thy Cause, and for thee? Oh! do it for me. When the Lord gives out the Decalogue as a Rule of Life, and to engage them the more, he preambles thus, *I am the Lord*; but that is not all, *thy God*, no Stranger; and this is not enough, but *who hath brought thee out of the House of* Egypt *and Bondage*; who hath done so much for thee, that thou mightst do it out of Love: Hence the *Love of Christ constrains us*, this will kindle Love, and Love thinketh nothing hard: *Jacob* will not think seven Years Service done to *Rachel* a great Time; *they seemed but a small Matter:* Why? *Because he loved her.* (5.) In sad outward Pressures and Afflictions, when robbed and stript of all outward Enjoyments, of Means, of Credit, of Friends, or Children, or Wife. Oh! be not discouraged; methinks Christ saith in this Case, as *Elkanah* to *Hannah*, *Am not I better to thee than many Husbands?* Am not I your Treasure? Am not I better than all your worldly Comforts? Why are ye cast down? Is not Christ yours? Is not God yours?

yours? And is not Christ God's? And is not all yours? What tho'. the Streams be dried up, is not the Fountain of all Good and Life opened? Is he not your Portion? *When all Refuge faileth thee, and no Man careth for thy Soul*; Oh! return in hither. *What tho' the Fig-tree blossom not, nor any Fruit be in the Vine, and the Labour of the Olive fail, and the Fields yield no Meat, and the Flocks are cut off from the Fold, and no Herd in the Stall; shall ye then mourn as these that have no Hope*, Hab. iii. 17, 18. Be it far from you: No, *Rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of thy Salvation.* (6.) When tempted to Sin, Oh! say then, Shall I do this against my Lord, my Master, my Head, who hath done so much for me? Shall I thus requite the Lord? And shall I give him Reason to complain? *I have brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me*, Isa. i. 2, 3, 4. Will I not pleasure him this once, seeing we are delivered for this End from all our Enemies, *that we might serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life*, Luke i. I remember when *Joseph* was tempted by his wanton and unclean Mistress, he said, *And seeing my Master hath withholden nothing from me, but you; shall I then do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* So say thou, when

he hath given thee all Things, and every Tree in the Garden of Life and Heaven to eat at thy Will, and hath only forbidden this one Tree of Sin: Oh! *do not this abominable Thing.* (7.) In Time of Death, when thou art taking an everlasting and long Farewel of all the World, never to see them again, and when thy Heart begins to fail, and break at this sad Parting, as loath to leave your old Acquaintance; Oh! remember then ye are but Pilgrims, while here; ye are going to your Father, to your Friend, to your Acquaintance, to your loving and dutiful Spouse; ye are going to possess and inherit your Portion: *I am going to my Father, and your Father, my God, and your God:* You are going to see your Father, and to have your Nuptials solemnized! Your dear Lord and Husband hath sent for you. What should the Members do but draw themselves to the Head? This is the prefixed Time, *the Day of Redemption:* The *Times of Refreshing* are before you; *all Sorrows shall fly away:* The Lord will never hide himself again. Oh! long for him, and say, *Welcome Death, welcome Sickness, welcome Ferry-man, that will have me over to my Father's Kingdom. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Amen.

MEDI-

MEDITATION V.

Considerations to crucifie the World.

IT will be in vain to seek to remedy vain Thoughts, if the Heart be in League with Idols and the World; for *whereever a Man's Treasure is, there will his Heart be:* Remove the Cause, and the Effect will easily be removed, otherwise ye do but lave out Water out of your Vessels, and suffer the Hole through which the Water comes in, to remain open: I have therefore thought fit, for this Cause and many others, to insert some Considerations, by which our Hearts may be weaned from the World: And therefore, *First*, To prevent Mistakes, know, that by the World,

I understand, *first*, the Pleasure, the Profit and Honour of the World, 1 *John* ii. 16. called *the Things of the World*, or *in the World*. (2.) By the World, I understand unregenerate, worldly, reprobate Men, *John* xvii. 9. *I pray not for the World*. (3.) That fleshly unregenerate Part, either in our selves or o-

thers, which savours *the Things of the World*, and which is earthly, called *the Old Man*, *Ephes.* iv. 22. and which opposes the regenerate Part, the Spirit, continually.

(2.) Know that I understand not these Things, as in themselves absolutely considered, for so they are good and useful; for every Thing that God made *is very good* and useful, *Gen.* i. 31. But I understand them, (1.) as they would be our Happiness, or any Part thereof, as they would be our End, our Rest, *Luke* xii. 19. and hence some make a God of their Belly, when those are counted necessary, so as the Heart cannot want them. (2.) As separated from God, considered in themselves independently from God, and without, neither as from him, nor as Means leading to him, *Zech.* vii. 7. 1 *Cor.* x. 31. *Neh.* ix. 35. (3.) As opposing and hindering of God and his Service, when like *Absalom* our Hearts are stollen away, *Hos.* iv. 11: (4.) As they further Sin, and are Fewel thereunto, *Psal.* lxxiii. 4, 5, 6. (5.) As they would be *esteemed above God*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 4. (6.) When esteemed necessary in these Respects, it is that we must despise, oppose and persecute the World.

(3.) Nor must we think that therefore we are bound to cast the World away from us, or not

not to use it at all; but we must use it, yet not so as to abuse it, and that we may be delivered from the Power of this great Sin, and that this Idol may be thrust from our Hearts, and we made to rise up against it with Hatred and Malice.

Consider, I. There are two great Competitors and Rivals, they are God and the World; and these Two draw all Men after them, and there is an everlasting Quarrel betwixt them: These that are with Christ are against the World, and whoso is with the World is against Christ; therefore it is the Duty of all Christians to rise up with Christ against the World; 'tis abominable either to love or fear it.

Consider, II. WHAT a despised ugly Thing the World is; is it not disdained by Christ? When he came into the World, he preferred Poverty, and the Evil thereof unto the Good thereof, *who being rich, yet was made poor*; it was nothing in his Thought: And he was not mistaken, he knew the Value of Things well enough; for in him dwells all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge; when he might have been a king, he refused it, *his Kingdom is not of this World*: And hath not this Lightlyhood of Christ stained, as it were, the Pride of all the World? He refused, scorned

ned and disdained the World's best Proffers; and what is this World, but a despised, affronted, contemned and disdained Thing? Christ, by refusing the World, hath affronted it; and Christ's Refusal is as it were a Paper Hat set upon it, to make it contemptible and disgraced, to hiss it out of the Estimation of his People; and when Christ hath done this to it, who will take it up? Who will honour it? 'Tis nothing to be disgraced with Men, nay, that's a Glory sometimes; but Christ's Reproaching and Scorn is a sad Weight, and rubs a real Infamy and Blot upon whom it lights.

III. Christ and the World are Enemies, proclaimed Enemies to one another, or the World is an Enemy, was an Enemy to Christ: The Friendship of the World is Enmity to God. All the Time Christ was in the World, it mocked, despised, reviled, opposed, persecuted him, and at last killed him, and that by the most ignominious and painful Death that could be: Because Christ would not be a Slave, and bow down to it, therefore it persecuted him, and turned his desperate Enemy. The World and Self is now like the Devil, and the first Angels not content with their first Habitations, and like the Man of Sin exalted as God in the Heart,

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the Temple of God, and there sits; and because Christ and his Followers will not bow down, and worship this golden Image, the World turns mad at him, uses all their Means, Power, and painted Religion and Authority against him: The World was worse than *Pilate*, who would have been content only to have chastised him, and so let him go: No, no; nothing would content them, but they must *crucifie him.* And as the World opposed Christ, with the same Malice they oppose his Members, his Doctrine, and all that pertains to him; and would ye know the Reason of it? They did so to the Master, and therefore the Servant must be the same Way dealt with, *John* xv. 18, 19, 20. True indeed, the World sometimes agree with the Godly; but it is, when Religion flourishes, and is too hard for them, then they flatter; or else it is, when the Lord's People basely bow down to them; and as it persecuted his Prophets, so it doth every one that will be religious, he must be sure of Persecution, they mock, they oppose, they vex, they persecute, they despise and contemn them, *Isaiah* viii. 16. *Gal.* iv. 29. 1 *Pet.* ii. 8. *Matth.* v. 11, 12. *Rev.* xi. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Rev.* xii. 7. And when foul Means will

will not do, it allures and flatters Folk from their Obedience unto Christ, and by Terror keeps the Inhabitants of the World in woful Bondage and Rebellion against the Lord of Glory: When Christ came to the World, he found very bad Quarters in it, and never rested, till they put him out of it again; and therefore, we think this should make us have War with the World for ever: Shall a Woman marry him that hath killed her Husband and deareſt Relations? Look therefore upon the World as a Murderer; How canſt thou look to be received in Mercy of Christ, who hath been all thy Lifetime honouring, prizing and esteeming his Enemies, and haſt been joining with them? Oh therefore! let the World in thy Thoughts be cried down, as guilty of an unpardonable Crime, cry out, O! baſe World, O! traiterous World, hate it, deſpiſe it, ſlight it, contemn it, mock it, perſecute, reprove it, deny it thy Heart or thy Preſence, ſay not a Confederacy to all, with whom this People ſaith a Confederacy, break down this Graven Image, take Heart and Courage, and go out of this woful Bondage, in which thou art intangled, and fight for your Liberties and Souls, and never reſt, till thou bring in Subjection, and

and overcome it by the Word of thy Testimony, sit and plot against it.

IV. THERE is War denounced by Christ against the World, and it is now his declared Enemy, 'tis a Rebel at the King's Horn declared, and condemned guilty of Treason; the Lord's Commission is against it, and it is of such a Nature, as his Commission against the *Canaanites*, spare neither Small nor Great, make no Covenants with them, break down their Images, the Lord hath raised Fire and Sword against it, he hath sent his Son, and while he was in the World, his Life was but a fighting against the World, and he overcame it: Methinks the Lord, as *Moses* said unto the Children of *Israel*, when he removed the Tabernacle, *Whoever is for the Lord, let him join hither*; and when he removed the Tabernacle of the Congregation, all that feared the Lord resorted to him; God hath under Christ Jesus the Captain of our Salvation, set up a Royal Standard against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; ye are enlisted in Baptism, as the Lord's Soldiers, and with him ye have engaged; I tell you, this is your Work to overcome the World, and in Heaven ye shall divide the Spoil; assoon

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as Christ was promised, War was denounced, I will put Enmity betwixt thy Seed, and her Seed; all the Prophets and Apostles, and Saints in all Ages, have been in hot War with the World. *Prov.* xxviii. 4. This is indeed to fight the Lord's Battle, and cursed be the Hands that spares, 'tis God's Enemies, neither give nor take Quarters, this Quarrel is very just, why so? the World is in Rebellion, and in Arms against the Lord, some openly, some with a Kiss betraying the Son of Man; and the World hath evermore invaded God, and usurped the Crown; and therefore, hath the Lord sworn he will have War with it, as with *Amalek* unto all Generations, and with all who shall join, nay, or stand neuter, they are cursed, because, they rise not up to help the Lord against the mighty: Oh! know it at last, the Lord will put the World and all her Lovers in a Bed of Sorrow: Oh therefore! join not with the World, ye know what the Lord said unto *Jehoshaphat*, Should thou help them that hate the Lord? befriend this Outlaw as ye will, God will count it Rebellion: Stand aback therefore, up and follow the Lord, and join with him, resist, crucify, watch against all that thou finds

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in thine own Heart to take this Rebel's Part.

V. 'Tis not only an Enemy, but an overcome Enemy, Christ and the World wrestled, and he gave it a dead Stroke; *I have overcome the World*, Joh. xvi. *ver.* last, and he hath bought Arms and Ammunition against it, he fought, as it were, the single Combate, not only in his own Name, but in the Name of all his Followers: Rejoice therefore, I have overcome the World; and hence it is, that all Christ's Soldiers, by Faith in him, overcome the World; Satan, Sin, and the World had a Plea, and pretended Law, Christ satisfied the Law, and compeared, and got *Sin* and the World *condemned in the Flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. and crucified it with himself on his Cross; and now there is a Sentence pronounced in Favours of Christ, and against the World. True indeed, the Archers grieved him sore, but his Bow abides strong, the *Jews* and his Enemies seconded with the Law, whom he behoved to satisfy, got him to a Grave, and bound him with the Bands of Death; yet Christ rose again, and did break out, and burst the Bands of Death, satisfied Justice, and is ascended triumphing in high Places; and as he did this himself, so he doth it in the

the Hearts of all his People; Why are ye then afraid of the World? Do ye fear a vanquished Enemy? Is not the Power of the World and Sin broken? there is a Nullity now in their Rights and Charters of Superiority, which by Sin and Man's Fall, the Devil got over the World, any Right they had was by the Law, but the Soul may offer to prove that the Law is satisfied; and therefore, the World is but an Usurper, and a conquered Enemy in Point of Law, and condemned, there is a Sentence pronounced in Christ's favours, that all his Enemies shall be troden under Foot.

VI. The World is but a decaying vanishing Thing, its best Days are done, its more than Afternoon, and the World's Sun is like to set shortly, and the Lord is whipping it to Destruction, it will be in a Fire and Flame shortly, and all the Glory thereof shall be burnt up, the Fashion of it is passing away, and being condemned, its going on the Wheels of Time to Execution: The World is now an old Hag, and its former Beauty is withered and gone, all its Pillars that filled it with Wonder, are all gone, and a few Years more will bring it to Destruction, Time will be no more, and it will be buried in the Pit of Oblivion, all the Troubles, Evils, Glory thereof

thereof, shall never be remembered any more, this Clock is going now, but it will run out, and be winded up in Eternity, Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return, 'tis on its Journey, its burning a while, it will come to nothing, and end in a fair Low: Cry out then, O vain, perishing, dying World! O withering World! O Man born only to dy! and how can ye fall in Love, and admire, and serve this Traitor that is overcome, condemned, and is now carried out to the Execution.

VII. THE World is but a Lie, Men of high Degree, and Men of low Degree are a Lie; *How long will ye seek Vanity, and follow after Lies?* The World is but a Deceiver, a meer Cheat, and a painted Shadow, Dreams and Appearances, the World, and the Glory thereof saith, they are Something, that's a Lie, for they are not. The World saith, as *Balak* of *Zippor* to *Balaam*, *Come with me, and I will honour thee, and will prefer thee to great Riches and Honours*; for all this is given me: But this is a Lye, it cannot do it, Promotion cometh neither from the East nor from the West; believe not the World, when it speaks fairest, there are seven Abominations in the Heart thereof; all the Damned in Hell, who now are under

der the Lash of God's Justice, see they are nothing but a Pack of cheated Fools, *Why spend ye your Money therefore for that which profiteth not, nor satisfies?* The Devil makes the Witches believe he gives them Money, and this Dream, Fancy and Deceit satisfies them for a while, but when they come to use it they find nothing but a Bubble; and so do Men find the World at last: Riches take unto themselves Wings, the World is a Juggler, and deludes our Senses, and hath an Appearance of Wisdom, Contentment, Riches and Happiness, when indeed it is Foolishness, and yet *their Posterity approve their Sayings*; it is but Sophistry, no sound Wisdom: Christ is the Truth, and his *Flesh is Meat indeed.* There is only the Appearance of Meat and Satisfaction in the World, *a meer Dream, Isa.* xxix. 8. The Man dreameth he eateth and drinketh, but when he awaketh indeed, he is hungry. How should we disesteem it? How should we laugh at this painted Fool that can do nothing? It cannot take away Life, for *it is I that kill, and it is I that make alive*; it is but a Bugbear, it cannot kill the Soul, and what's Life? no great Matter, a perishing shadow, a Tale that's told, and all that the World can do is but to interrupt a Tale,

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all the World's Beauty is but Paintry and Varnishing, all its Glory but Fading, all its Promises and Threats but Lies and Stories and Ambiguities, all its Strength but weakness, loud sounding Shot but no Balls, only Powder that doth no Harm. Life is the greatest Thing in this World, *all that a Man hath will he give for his Life*, and yet when a Christian's Life is taken away, he hath a Life hid with Christ, which is above the VVorld's Reach, and all they can do is to flit a Sinner from Grace to Glory. When the World therefore allures and courts thee to join with its Threats and Promises, say, O cheating World! Flee from it as a Dissembler, believe not a word that it saith.

VIII. The World is a prejudicial Thing, it is the high Way to be ruined, to make up our selves in the World; to find our Life in the World, is indeed to lose it; it is a Way to get God our Enemy, it hath done us much Ill, brought much Evil upon us, hindered many Things from us, which else we should have, *Psal.* lxxxi. *I would have fed thee with Honey from the Rock*, Deut. v. 29. 'Tis past speaking what the World hath done to us; it doth us much Evil, 'tis the Covering and Veil on the Eyes of all

Nations, and the Pearl; that hinders us from seeing the Glory of the Lord; it is the Partition Wall that separateth betwixt the Lord and us; it is the Log tied to our Feet, that we cannot come unto the Lord; 'tis the Devil's Bait, his *Pander* courting Souls to Hell, the old Bawd; we would not sin were it not the World. The World is Sin's Solicitor and great Agent; it is the Bait that draws so many Fish to the Devil's Net, and to the Pit; and it is a Bone that *pierces and strikes thorow with many Sorrows*, 1 *Tim.* vi. 9. procures many a Blow, many a Gloom from the Lord. *Isa.* lvii. *For the Iniquity of his Covetousness I was wroth, I smote him.* Many Evils and Afflictions doth it bring on, but it intends much more Evil; it intends to cheat you of your Souls, to allure you unto the Pit, and to bring you unto eternal Bondage and Prison; and this is all that the World seeks and intends. Up therefore, fight, kill or be killed, break open this mighty strong Prison, say to your Hearts as the *Philistines* said, 1 *Sam.* iv. *Fight for your Lives and Countries lest ye be Slaves, up and be valiant, quit your selves like Men:* shake off the World's Yoke, and golden soft, though strong Bonds, kill this Enemy within thee, that is seeking to cut

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thy Throat, and by killing it free thy self.

IX. THE World is but *the Portion of the Wicked*, Psal. xvii. 14. A Bone that is cast unto the Dogs, the Puddle in which the Swine of this World wallow in; to meddle with this is Baseness, It is Injustice to meddle with what is not your own, it is the Wicked's, it is the Portion given by the Lord to Bitterns, to Owls, to Cormorants; it is Idolatry to meddle with this, God hath provided better Things for you; meddle with your own, delight thy self in the Lord, let the Lord be your Delight, Fear, Love and Glory.

MEDITATION VI.

Of Sin, and the Power thereof.

IF we be so charitable, as to think God no Liar, Sin is the greatest Evil in the World, though many other Evils be more lamented; it is a vile Evil, it is a prejudicial Evil, it is a dangerous Evil, it is a deceitful Evil, and it is a most strong,

powerful Evil: So that any unregenerate Man is not only miserable, and sinful, and vile, and in hazard of Hell, but lies tied fast Hand and Foot in this woful Bondage, unable to help himself, and it is therefore call'd, *The Power of Darkness*, *Acts* xxvi. 18. *Luke* xi. 21. it is called *the strong Man*, and therefore Saints *wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities and Powers in high Places*, Eph. vi. 12. so as all strength to subdue Sin is now gone, *Rom.* v. *6. When without Strength, Christ died for the Ungodly.* Now that it is so, take these few Considerations that will shew it.

I. Sin is stronger than Man, *Rom.* vii. 18. *How to perform that which is good I find not*; we think our selves strong, but let us set all our Wits, Resolutions and Power in one, we cannot stand against Sin; Sin hath conquered and subdued Thousands and Millions, but never one, save the Man Christ, subdued it: Man is but a weak Thing in respect of Sin; he is led at Satan's Will in his Chain, 2 *Tim.* ii. 26. There is no Comparison here.

II. The Devil is called strong, stronger than all the World; but Sin is stronger than the Devil, for it overcame him, and now he is ruled by Sin, and acted by it. Holi-

ness,

neſs, and the formal Viſion of God and Bleſſedneſs, were ſtrong Guards for Free-will; yet Sin brake in upon them, and ſtrake down Devils and Men from their Excellency, when they were in their beſt Eſtate, *Eccleſ.* vii. 29.

III. No Means can prevail againſt Sin, it is a ſtrong City, that all the Batteries, Cannons, and other Engines of War cannot ſhake, or make a Breach in it: Sin hath now been long aſſaulted by God, and many Means uſed, and *Archers grieved it ſore*, but yet *Sin's Bow abideth ſtrong*. Many an Aſſault hath God made, but the City is unconquered to this Day; God hath uſed Sermons, Exhortations, Mercies, Croſſes, Miracles, and hath been hacking and hewing at ſin, and all in vain, the Power of ſin is unbroken ſtill; nay, he hath come to the very Heart, and there ſtriven and contended, and that Day by Day, and a very great Power hath been let out on Spirits, and yet to this Day no Reformation. Ten great and fearful Plagues could not bow *Pharaoh's* Heart, the *Graſhoppers*, *Rain*, *Thunder*, *Hail*, *Frogs*, *Lice*, *Flies* and *Locuſts* could conſume and deſtroy the Trees, Fruits and Corn of the Land of *Egypt*; but all theſe Things could not deſtroy

Pharaoh's Pride and Obstinacy: That was a greater Matter indeed. And do not our woful Eyes see, through sad Experience, that a wicked, ignorant, formal, profane, slight, unconstant, hypocritical Generation, can break through Vows, Promises, Mercies, Sicknesses, Convictions, Terrors, Sermons, Exhortations, Challenges, and that renewed Day by Day; I say, can pass through all these unto Hell. It is said of the Book with seven Seals, *None was found in Heaven and Earth that could loose it*; so it may be said, None was ever found, no Mean yet found that could conquer sin, there is no Remedy for sin, Man's Heart is such a Soil, that all the Pains that the Wisdom of God can invent, cannot make it bring forth Fruit. *Isa.* v. 4. *What more could have been done than I have done, and yet no other Grapes but wild Grapes brought forth.* True, the Lord can convert, let all the World, and Sin and Satan join in one; but this is by Miracle.

IV. SIN is the strongest Power on Earth, stronger than Men, than Devils, than Means, than common Works of the Spirit, nay than real Grace; for *Paul*, a regenerate Man, saw himself *led Captive unto the Law of Sin and Death*, for all his Grace, till

till a new Recruit of Influences from the Head, Christ, was sent forth, *Romans* vii. 24.

V. SIN is as strong as Death; no Bands are stronger than the Bands of Death, all the Wisdom and Power of the World cannot unloose these Chains; a dead Man cannot rise, cannot walk, cannot act, cannot see, cannot plot. If a Man once go to this Prison of the Grave, there needs no Fear of breaking it, there needs no Jaylor; Death's Arrest was never broken by any mortal Man meerly, yet *Sin is as strong as Death*, Eph. ii. 1. *Dead in Sins and Trespasses*, 1 Tim. v. 6. *She that liveth is dead in Sin, and hence to be delivered from Sin, is to be translated from Death to Life*, 1 John iii. 14. Ezek. xxxvii. 2. Sinners are but *a Bundle of dead Bones, and very dry.* Death cannot be resisted when it comes, and therefore all must die and unclothe themselves: so it cannot be broken or freed from, when once Death seizes on a Soul. It was God's Curse, *In the Day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die:* And, *The Wages of Sin is Death*, Rom. vi. 26. Now, every Man and Woman is dead in sin, can do nothing, every Worm Temptation tramples and feeds upon them; and here

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in this Bondage must they ly, unable to help themselves by the least Sigh or Groan, till Christ out of meer Pity pass by, and say, *Come forth, and live.* As a dead Man cannot rise up and live, no more canst thou that art a dead Sinner live a new Life: Nay, as a dead Man cannot do the least Action, so no more canst thou do the least Duty. External Principles may set thee on, true; but then it is not from a Principle of Life. Many Men live and go like the Clock, that is, Artificially; thou canst not so much as breathe one living Desire after God.

VI. All the World will join with Sin against thee; ye have not only sin to fight against, but ye have sin's conquered Subjects. All the World is now lying in Wickedness, subdued by sin, which hath past on all, the Devil and thine own Heart, and all the Evils they can imagine will be upon thee ere thou art aware. And hence, let a Man but look out for Heaven, all the World is on his Top; sin then presses a Levy of all its Powers to resist him; so that if Devils, if the Power, Wit, Policy of Hell; if the Malice, Flattery, Power, Snares and Fear of Men can do it; if the World's Deceit, Power, Craft and Glory; if the Deceitfulness of thine own Heart; if all

all the Temptations and Suggestions that all these can use; I say, If all these can do it, back thou shalt be brought again: If these can keep thee in thy natural Condition, there thou shalt remain. *Luke* xiv. 26. 2 *Cor.* iv. 8, 9. 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *Psal.* xviii. 4, 5. *Eph.* vi. 12. *Mat.* xi. 12. So that to go to Heaven is one of the mightiest Works that ever was attempted; *Harder to go through the Eye of a Needle, than to go to Heaven.* The *Israelites* suffered no more in the Wilderness by fiery Serpents, by Wants, by Hunger and Thirst, by Enemies to pass through the *Red Sea*, than thou must do ere thou canst come to Heaven.

VII. 'Tis a hard Business to change Nature; a Horse cannot make himself a Man, a Dog cannot make himself a Horse or an Ox: Though ye were to be damned upon it, what would ye think, unless you could turn your selves into Angels, were not ye in a sad Case? and yet so it is, unless you turn your selves unto other Natures damned you must be. Ye are now Swine, Dogs, Serpents, Vipers, Cockatrices; and turned ye must be into Lambs, into Sheep; I say, *your very Natures must be changed*, 2 Cor. v. 17. Nay ye must be Partakers of the Divine Nature, which is a hard Business,

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ere ye can enter into Heaven, your blind Eyes must see, and deaf Ears must hear and understand, and ye must love that which ye hated, and hate that which ye loved, and do all this as God doth. 2 *Pet.* i. 4.

VIII. SIN is as strong as a Man's Nature is; a Man cannot deny Nature, to be a Man in Scripture Language, is to be a sinner, and to walk as Men, is to walk sinfully; and so 'tis a *Man's Nature*, 1 Cor. iii. 1. it is *the Mind*, Rom. viii. 7. so as sin is the Mind, it is *his Flesh*, Gal. v. 17. it is *his Members*, Col. iii. 3. it is *his right Eye, his right Hand, his right Foot*, Matth. xxix. 30. it is *his Soul that he must exercise Judgment against*, Deut. xiii. 6. it is *himself, in me*, that is, *in my Flesh*; a Man must deny himself, it is *his Life*, Isa. lvii. 10. it is *the Heart*, Jer. xvii. 9. Now then to quite sin is to quite a Man's self, to crucify sin is to crucifie his own Soul, to pluck out his own Eyes and Hands, and to crucifie and kill them; so that ere ye get sin out of you, ye must fork out Nature out of you. It was impossible for the *Ethiopian* to change his Blackness, which was but accidental to him: O how much more then for a Man to deny himself, and to drive out Nature! Oh! here is a mighty hard Business. Ye know when

when a Diſeaſe ſeiſes on the vital Parts, it is irrecoverable; O but Sin hath now ſeiſed on the Heart, on the Soul, on the Affections, on the Life, and what Remedy then can be uſed? When the Leproſie did ſpread in the Garment, and fret within, nothing was for it but to be burnt with Fire; Oh! now ſin is become as thy ſelf, now is become your Nature, ſo as it is as impoſſible to quit ſin, as it is for a Toad to quit his poiſonable Nature. It is thy Nature to ſin, thy Nature to grieve God; and to help this is to take Nature out of thee, it is fretted within: *No Man hateth his own Fleſh*, ſaith *Paul*, and yet ſo it muſt be, ere a Man can go to Heaven. To crucifie ſin, is to put violent Hand in a Man's own Life, *Deut.* xiii. 6.

IX. The Lord's Power is known in nothing more than in ſubduing of Sin; it is ſo mighty, ſo glorious a Work, that Chriſt thought it not unbeſeeming Omnipotency to meddle with: Grace, Mercy, Power and Goodneſs never appears ſo much as in ſubduing of ſin, 1 *John* iii. 5. *He was manifeſted to deſtroy the Works of the Devil, he is mighty to ſave all that come to him, mighty to pardon*, Numb. xiv. 3. Mighty to ſubdue, ſo as the Church cries, *Who is ſo great*

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a God as thou, who ſubdues Iniquity? Mic. vii. 19. A Chriſtian muſt be ſtrengthned with all Might, *Col.* i. 11. *Eph.* vi. 11. *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might;* Why ſo? becauſe *we wreſtle againſt Principalities and Powers, and ſpiritual Wickedneſs.* Now, he ſaith not, *in his Power,* or *in his Might;* but, *in the Power of his Might,* or *in the Power of his Power,* the very Quinteſcence of his Power. Oh! there will needs be a ſtronger Act of Power put forth than was at the making of the World out of nothing; God muſt call louder, and draw ſtronger than ever he did. The mightieſt Pull that Chriſt drew, was in drawing a ſinner to himſelf. Some ſay Miracles are ceaſed; no indeed, ſo long as there are any Saints in the World; for they are Wonders and Miracles, *Iſa.* viii. 16. Never a Saint but removes Mountains; and in this the Power of God is made manifeſt. It was ſaid of *Leviathan,* and I ſhall conclude with it, *Canſt thou put a Hook in Sin's Noſe, or bore his Jaws with a Thorn? Wilt thou bind him for thy Maidens? His Teeth are terrible, his Heart is as firm as a Stone, he cannot be moved; he eſteemeth Iron as Straw, and Braſs as rotten Wood; upon the Earth there is none like him, he is King over all the Children*

dren of Pride. Yet apply this, Tho' he be Chief, *yet he that made him can make his Sword approach unto him.* Job xl. 29.

I will now shew you some Seasons when Sin discovers its Power.

I. When a Man or Woman hath been long accustomed to sin, then sin in them is like an unmoveable Rock; *If the* Ethiopian *change his Blackness, or the Leopard his Spots, then he that is accustomed to do Wickedness may leave off,* Jer. xiii. 23. Look to old Sinners, to old Drunkards, they cannot leave it; old Hypocrites cannot be sincere, old slothful Persons cannot now go nor walk, they are so sinful; an accustomed Swearer cannot leave off, an old ignorant Person we cannot get convinced, but they will hold Deceit fast. When Folk are young and tender, we may the more easily turn them; but when this Twig turns an old Tree, there is no pulling of it out of the Root: An accustomed sinner cannot but sin; Habit is a second Nature. Ye excuse sin, and say it is a Custom; I say, so much the worse, now ye cannot leave it: It is hard convincing of an old sinner, and difficult parting with an old Acquaintance; sin's Power is best seen in them of any.

II. Sin's

II. SIN's Power is much seen, in resisting an inward Change; while a Man or Woman seek to change no more but the Form, this they find easy; but when they come to change the Heart, this is difficult. It is easie to put on a new Suit of Clothes, and to change our Garments, but to take the old Heart away and the old Nature, is a very difficult Work; many a Man comes easily to change his Coat, but not his Heart: It is easy to paint a Man, but it is difficult to make a Man; a little Formality and a Profession will paint a Man, but no Art will make a Christian, *Matth.* iii. 27. An Enemy may easily take in the outward Suburbs of the City, but the City it self cannot be so easily taken in at all: It is easie to part with a few Words for Christ, to wear his Cloaths for a while; Oh! but when he seeks the Heart, there is no Hearing in that side of the Head. Christ may make Inroads, Excursions and Assaults upon many a damned Hypocrite, but he never entred into the Heart of the Kingdom of Satan.

III. SIN appears in a violent and powerful maintaining of the Idol sin: Ask an Hypocrite that is under some Fear, what will he give for Christ? will he quit this Sin?

Sin? Yes, he will, and every sin; only in this forgive, one sin he must have; every swine must have its Husk: A Man is very patient till ye smite on the sore, on his Idol, and then he gets up; a Man is very obedient, till it come to putting away the Idol, and then they tell they will not, or else go away sorrowful, or else trust in God's Mercy; not that he will subdue their sins, but that he will save them in their sins. Now when this is stricken at, there the Rebellion appears, here the Power appears, here sin holds, and will not let it go. The young Man held up with Christ, till Christ pitcht upon his Idol, and then he forsook him, *Matth.* xix. 21, 22. This sin Men will defend if they can; this Sin they will not quit, and cannot quit; this is the Viceroy, and therefore, cannot quit it; and therefore, there is no Resisting: This is their Life, their Treasure, and this *Delilah* cannot be given up.

(4.) Sin's Power appears under Indispositions; take a Man under Indispositions, and bid him go about any Duty: No, Sin hath bound him now Hand and Foot; and therefore he cannot do ought. Now he cannot pray, confer, cannot meditate, cannot exhort; while a great Stone is rolling, a little

Strength will put it forward; let it once settle, and then ye cannot stir it; take your Hearts while they are afloat, and ye easily go forward; then ye run the Ways of God's Commandments; but let the Waters fall, then ye cannot move, more than ye can do a Ship on dry Land, *Psal.* cxix. 5. The Disciples could not *watch one Hour* for all Christ's Entreaty, *for their Eyes were heavy.* Sometimes ye can pray, speak, exhort, wait, and read; this is the Hour of God's Power, but at another time ye can do nought; ye cannot so much as speak one Word; ye are bound, that ye cannot stir Hand nor Foot, cannot watch, nor walk; how? what is the Matter? Here it is; *Now is the Hour of Darkness*, as Christ said; this is some solemn Day, and therefore see now the Power of Sin appearing in its Strength.

(5.) The Power of Sin appears and shows it self in time of Temptation; a Man is very moderate, very religious, very chaste, while there is no Opportunity; and Sin is very quiet, and sleeps; but when the Temptation is set, and the poor Soul and it yoked, then Sin stirs: The Spider never appears out of her Hole, until the Fly be entangled in her Net, and then she appears and destroys the poor Creature, taking it with

with her. Sin never ſtirs till once the Soul and a Temptation be met, and then it aſſaults: *Peter* would not out of a Temptation deny his Maſter; but when it came, he could not reſiſt it: An Enemy will never appear, unleſs they ſee an Advantage: A Man confeſſes nothing, till on the Rack. It is a very difficult Work to ſay Nay to a Temptation; a Man will then ſee, feel, lay violent Hands on him: A Man in private out of a Temptation hopes he will do well enough, and hence promiſes, vows and reſolves againſt it; and Sin never ſays Nay; the Tentation comes, and then the Heart cannot be holden in, when once it hears the Devil's Knock: The Baſilisk kills with its Look, ſo doth a Temptation.

(6.) Sin appears in croſſing a thorough and perfect Subjection of the Heart; Sin will, like the *Canaanites*, give a Tribute to God, but they will not give all away: A Kingdom's Strength and Glory is not ſeen in the Commons of it, nor in the Cottages therein: Chriſt ſhall get the Commons, a Stable, a Manger to lie in; but the beſt Rooms will not be given. While *Paul* lived in an outward Conformity to the Law, and Sin poſſeſt the Heart, *Paul* was never troubled, and found Duties eaſie; but when the

Law discovered Heart Sin and Lusts, then Sin got up. When the Spirit is upon a Work of Conversion, and conquering and assaulting the Heart, the Powers of Sin appear on the Walls with all manner of Instruments of War, ready to resist; then 'tis hard to pray, then 'tis hard to believe, then 'tis hard to obey Christ. Beware of prophesying in the King's Chappel, or else ye will see what a Power will resist you. It is a Saying a carnal Heart will never digest, to give all away, and to take the Lord only; no, but they will, like the *Assyrians*, serve the Lord and their Idols; they will speak with Christ, borrow and lend, and give some petty Gifts: But to marry, and give Heart and Hand, and all their Fortune, and all; here *is a hard Saying*, To go about all Duties, and leave all Sins, *who can bear it?* When *Moses* said, *Not a Hoof shall remain, we must have all; then see my Face no more*, Ex. x. 26, 28. Here Sin opposes God; this is an impossible Work.

(7.) Sin appears, when prest with Self-denying Duties, such as costs a Man Shame, Hatred and Reproach; this Pill cannot down, there Sin will not bow: Hence, I have found these three most difficult Duties, and much opposed by Sin; Reproof, especially

ally of great Ones; why this expoſes me to their Wrath or Hatred; profeſſing of God before wicked Company, this begets Shame; exhorting, inſtructing all Sorts of People, acknowledging of Faults to one another, and ſo giving Glory unto God; and laſtly, the patient bearing of Injuries and Affronts, why the Credit is on it. Men ſay, That to take ſuch a Courſe as this, will expoſe me to the Hatred of all Men; this is to be a meer Mocking-ſtock to the whole World; this is never to ſee a good Day; ſo it is indeed, and ſo it muſt be, or elſe we cannot be Chriſt's Diſciples, preſs the Soul with any of theſe, and ye ſhall find it as unmoved as a Rock. The Heart ſaith as *Pharaoh, So do God to me, as I would do:* Theſe Men fall cleanly out with God then; but let God ſeek any other Thing than this, he ſhall be welcome.

(8.) In oppoſing of Diligence, a carnal Heart would be content to do Duties, but to be taken up with them, it cannot: 'Tis hard to make this their Work and their Meat, to pleaſe God; no, they taſte it poſſibly, but it were Death to have no other Meat: A Gentleman for his Recreation will put his Hand to any mercenary Employment. Oh! but to take you to this Trade is intolerable;

Men will try Duties once a Day, or two times, and put to their Hands: Oh but to take them to this Calling, so as to make it their one Work, their Trade and their Calling, their Meat and Drink, to set their Hearts to it, here the Strength of Sin appears; and hence spiritual Prayer, Examination and Meditation are neglected, and all extraordinary Duties, and extraordinary Times, not always abounding in the Work of the Lord, slight Work pleases.

(9.) The Power of Sin appears in seeking to be free of the Yoke: Sometimes a Man engages, and for a Day hangs down the Head, but to keep the Wound always open is very hard. A Man will pray, and pray fervently; but afterward to look up, and to watch, and depend closly on God, 'tis impossible; so to watch or wait for a while, as that wicked King did, 2 *Kings* vi. 32. is easie, but to take *Job*'s Resolution to do it *all the Days of their Life*, is impossible. It is one Thing to see God, and to come to him where he is; but to take up their Dwelling-place in God for ever, is very hard. Gentlemen and Courtiers may for an Hour or a Night get into some poor Country Cottage, but it would be Death to them to stay there; 'tis Death to a carnal Heart to stay with

with God; and therefore, though he keep in himself, as a damm'd up Stream, from his Idols, yet he must at last break out with the greater Violence. 'Tis a hard Duty to wait God's Leisure; in a Word, 'tis hard to go about any expensive Duties, that will cost either Time, Life, Means, or Credit, or Ease.

MEDITATION VII.

The Voice of Backslidings.

NO Evil more common than the secret and subtile departing of the Heart from the Lord, so that this Sin is *a Weight that doth easily beset* these whose Hearts are single in the Lord's Sight: All Sins are a departing from the Lord, and there is no temptation that the Lord's People meet with, that prejudices them more, than their Fallings and Slips, through Security and Deceitfulness of Sin; for when the poor Soul is thus taken, and called again to Account, 'tis full of Confusion, and knows not what to do; its Hands are weakned, Faith is

gone, the Heart through Fear and Shame, and Heartleſneſs, is afraid to come unto God; and hence its Language is as in *Benjamin's* Caſe, *Shall I go out any more againſt my Sins and Luſts?* And oftentimes the Heart is filled with a ſecret Diſcontent, whereby Murmuring and Fretting doth enſue. And that which is worſe, Men take this to be their Duty, and the Lord ſeems to ſay to them, as he once ſeem'd to ſay, or rather ſeem'd to will the Children of *Iſrael, no more to cry unto him, but to go unto the Gods whom they have ſerved*; and therefore know, that whatever is Duty, that ought to tie us, and look whatever is God's Mind in letting his People ſin, that is the Voice of Backſliding.

And therefore it is not, (1.) That therefore we ſhould ſin more againſt the Lord; Sin is never Duty: When we ſin, and depart after our Idols, yet do not think that the Lord iſſues a Proclamation to ſerve Sin; the Reins now are not off our Necks; we have neither a Command nor Liberty to ſin; it was a bad Argument, *We have loved Strangers; and therefore after them will we go.* God is ever worſe pleaſed with our ſinning, than with abſtaining from Sin; and

this

this is God's great Goodneſs: If thou haſt made a Breach, make it no greater; if thou haſt offended, it grieves him; if thou haſt tranſgreſſed, rebel not; if thou haſt done Evil, yet know thou mayeſt be worſe, and do more Evil, and draw down more Evil upon thy ſelf; thou mayeſt procure thee a hotter Furnace. True, Men ſay not this; but yet let Men look unto the Inclination of their Hearts, and they ſhall ſee them after treacherous Dealing, even turn deſperate, *Jer.* ii. 28. Like Gameſters, the more they loſe, the more they play.

(2.) Nor are we by Backſlidings to loſe our Hopes and Confidence in God, *Jer.* ii. 28. We are never to ſay, *There is no Hope in* Iſrael *concerning this Thing:* The ſaddeſt and moſt deſperate Caſe a Sinner can be in, cannot be Ground of caſting away his Hope, and of Deſpair: Deſpair and Unbelief is never Duty, but a Sin: Look to me, is a continued Voice that never ends to a living Man; the Door is never ſhut till Death, *Matth.* xxv. 10. *Eccl.* ix. 4. *To a living Man there is Hope: Truſt in him at all Times, all ye People;* there is never Ground to deſpair, while his Hands are ſpread all the Day long: A Man cannot know the Lord, and deſpair of him: There is as great Ground of Con-

fidence

fidence and Hope in God, as of Love to him, *Pſ.* ix. 10. When the Lord ſays, *he will no more help*, yet he likes well to be intreated, *Judg.* x. 16. Chriſt commends the Faith that will not take Chriſt at his firſt Word, when he ſaith, *I am not ſent*, &c. Laying of the Mouth in the Duſt, and quiet and ſilent Hoping doth well conſiſt together: Let thy Sins pluck down thy Pride and Glory, but not thy Hope in his Mercy: Fear not to preſume, when ye truſt in God's Mercy only, not only for Pardon of Sin, but for removing of Sin, not of ſome Sins, but of all Sins; when tempted therefore to doubt of God, after Sin, reject it as a Temptation of Satan.

(3.) Backſlidings, though frequent, never looſe us from our Duty; and this is the greateſt Obligation we can be under, that we never get our Leave as bad Servants to God, but are under an eternal Engagement to Duty: This Command of ſerving God ſtanding everlaſtingly in Force, while we live, as long as thine Eyes can ſee it in thy Bible; and whenever thy Ears hear it, or thy Heart conceives, God cries to thy Heart and Ears; the Relation of Maſter and Servants ſtands for ever; Sin cannot divorce us from God; it may overcloud, but it cannot break this comfortable Bond. 'Tis a

Queſtion,

Queſtion, whether the Damned in Hell be under an Obligation of loving, praiſing, and praying to God; if not, then their Hatred and Blaſphemy againſt God were no Sin: But however, we that are in the Land of the Living, are under a perpetual Obligation: *His Word endureth for ever*, and has an effectual Ty upon us. Sin is a Ground of *turning to God*, *Hoſ.* xiv. 1. It cannot therefore be a Ground of continuing in Sin, not turning to God is in fair Language continuing in Sin: This Voice ſounds, Turn, even after we *have played the Harlot with many Lovers*, *Jer.* ii. 3. Yet turn, and immediately after Guilt, 1 *Sam.* xii. 20. 'Tis true, the Voice may ſound, when Hands are full of Blood; *Bring no more vain Oblations*, Iſai. i. 16. *I hate your ſolemn Aſſemblies*; *turn to your Idols*, *but pollute not my holy Name*, Amos v. 21, 22, 23. but this not in reſpect of what is bygone; but when they continue in Sin, he upbraideth none with either what they have been, or done, or what they are againſt their Will; he remembers not what is paſt, but what is, and not for every Sin that is, but what wilfully is; he hates not their holy Performances for what they have done, but becauſe the Hands are, not were, full of Blood; and therefore he that ſaith,

Bring

Bring no more vain Oblations, saith likewise, *Wash you, make you clean*; and, *let Judgment run down as Waters*. There was never a Sinner refused for what was past; 'tis not Sin, but Continuance in Sin that damns.

(4.) Nor is the Voice of Backsliding, either in Heart or in Practice, go and help your selves, wash your selves, wash away with your Meditations, Prayer, Watchings, and other Duties and Sorrows, both the Guilt and Filth of Sin; and then will I have you come to me, but not till then, as many do, seeking Righteousness by the Law, and Help from themselves, going to King *Jareb*, when they see their Wound; and to what will we do, when pricked in the Heart, and fitting themselves for Christ and Mercy, and not humbly seeking to Christ, for preparing of the Heart? No, come unto him with thy vile unprepared Heart. Let not the Filthiness of thy Heart, nor the Indispositedness of thy Heart keep thee from Christ, *Rev.* iii. 18. *Because blind, and naked, and miserable, come therefore, and buy*; bring the Thief out, that ye may be ashamed: God doth not suffer Sin to wound, that we might heal our selves; for he smites and heals: We are to come to him in our Shame and Sores, with the Fang in our Hand,

Hand, and the Tokens of our Shame to Christ, that he may heal.

(5.) Nor are ye by your Sins and Evils, though frequent, to conclude it will never be better: Man knoweth not what is before him. 'Tis not Presumption to say, It may be better for ought I know: His Mercies are new every Morning: *A Fountain opened unto the House of David*, that runs always as the Issue of thy Sins runs always: The Plaister must be as big as the Sore, else it reflects on Christ. A present Case is but a fallible Prognostick of future Events.

(6.) Nor is it the Voice of Backsliding, or Plagues of Heart, *yet a little while, and I will turn*; but not presently, not so suddenly, after Sin to come in before God; the Cause of which is not Sloth simply, and desire to be with Idols, and after a little Sleep and Slumber; but 'tis a Kind of Principle in Divinity, that a tender Heart is ordinarily subject unto, when taken in a Fault, they think it much Presumption then to come in to God; but let a little Time wear away, and be gone, and then they come in before God. They think, as Man forgets Faults, and as themselves forget Faults by Time, so the Lord doth so. I say then, that immediately after the Commission of Sin,

Sin, it is Time to turn unto God, while thy Heart is most burdened with it, and under its freshest Impressions, than to let it wear out of thy Mind by Time: The Truth is, here's the deceitful Mystery; Men cannot take Shame to themselves, and have no Will to be seen with the Fang in their Hand: And 'tis base, and contrary to the proud Nature of Man to come, and the Marks of his Whoredoms before God; and therefore, stays till he wipe his Mouth, and Time wear away the Impressions of Guilt from his Conscience; and thus being disburdened by Time, not by Christ, comes with less Sorrow and Pain at last to Christ: And thus, though they come not with less Sin than before, yet with less Sense of Sin; and because they have forgotten it, God likewise forgets it: But though Time doth make Man forget Faults and Injuries, yet he is not like unto our selves, and will not forget Sins, as we do, but will remember them.

(7.) Nor is the Voice of Backsliding this, to rejoice, as having a greater Right to Christ, and being more loved by him than formerly: Who would have thought that ever any should imagine this? And yet this Wantoness and Madness hath the abounding of Grace, where Sin hath abounded, occasioned

sioned: For though it were granted, that the Promises are to Sinners as Sinners, or while Sinners, or under the Notion of Sinners, yet will not this follow; for it is not Sinners simply to whom the Promises are given, but seen, known and felt Sinners: And therefore, though we may rejoice that we see and feel Sin, which is an Act of Grace, yet are we to mourn for the Object, *viz.* Sin it self; for it is not the Promise simply that doth effectually discharge, or give Right or Title, but the Promise manifested: The Promise therefore being to Sinners, hence ere the Promise can be manifested, Sin must be manifested. Whenever Sin is manifested aright, then is Misery and Undoneness manifested, and so Sorrow will follow: 'Tis true *David* saith, *Forgive, because my Sin is great*; but the Greatness of his Sin is not the Ground of his Hope: But penitent Believers use this Expression, not as a Motive of Mercy, but as an Evidence that Mercy will hereby be heightned; and hence though Sin, as great, procures not Mercy, yet, as great, it heightens Mercy, when obtained.

(8.) Nor should we therefore come in suddenly, without any Shame or Sorrow for Sin, affrontedly and impenitently, 'tis Duty then to stand aback at a Distance; beware of that Freedom

Freedom and Familiarity with God, that he will tolerate at another Time in thee, and with others, when after Duty; take not now the highest Place, but the lowest Place; let not the Relation thou stands in with God, or believed Promises, make thee forget the *Rock from whence thou wast hewn*: 'Tis true, ye are to believe in Christ; but then let not the outward Sound of the Word be your Warrant; for this being dead will produce but a dead Faith; but labour to hear God speaking a Word to thee in thy Heart: 'Tis true, the outward Word binds to Duties of believing, loving, praying, ay, and binds to these, as outwardly revealed; but it is not as outward that it works Grace in the Heart, but as spoken to the Heart: Labour therefore to wait till God speak; be restless till the Lord apply this Word unto thy Soul; hammer not a Faith of thy own making unto thy self; Faith can act one Way, when not in another: By what is not the Voice of Backsliding and Sins, ye may perceive, what is the Voice of Backsliding. (1.) To search and try our Ways, and to consider them; this is the first Step to see what we are doing, *Lam.* iii. 40. *Hag.* i. 2. And the Evil of what we are doing, and what we shall do, *Luke* xv. 17. The Prodi-

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gal conſidered when he came to himſelf. (2.) Theſe Departings of Heart cry out, O the Deceitfulneſs, Power and Evil of a ſinful Heart; and therefore *Hezekiah* is left to himſelf, that he may know all that is within him; it ſays, Take a View of Sin, and learn to know your ſelf better, ſpell your Proneneſs to Backſliding by this, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31. (3.) It ſays, *Truſt not in thy Heart*; for ye ſee what a Devil you have by the Hand, and ſpeaks out this, that they are many that make *the Arm of Fleſh their Strength*, and our Falling ſays we are not God, *Ezek.* xxviii. 9. (4.) It cries, Mourn, grieve and lament, and ſhow thy Hatred to Sin by this, *Hoſ.* 9. 1. *Rejoice not, as others do, for Joy, ſince thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God*; mourn not, as Pennance or Satisfaction, but, as an Evidence of thy Repentance, and of thy Hatred for Sin; be in Bitterneſs, make the Fleſh pay for all, chaſtiſe thy Soul, *a Rod for the Fool's Back*; *Delight is not ſeemly for a Fool.* (5.) Hate, loathe, and diſlike Sin more, be ſtirred up againſt it with more Hatred, Indignation, and Revenge, as now having done thee more Ill than ever; let thy Falls by Sin rowſe up thy Malice, and Hatred and Courage againſt Sin, to do it an ill Turn, and

to serve it as it hath served thee; and desire not to die, till thou, like *Samson*, be avenged on the *Philistines* for *thy two Eyes*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 11. Let Injuries provoke thee to a just Wrath; here only hate thy Enemy, judge, lest God judge you. (6.) It saith, Be *humble and low*, nay *vile in thine own Eyes*, open not thy Mouth, lay it in the Dust, stand afar off when thou comest to God, like the poor *Publican*, beating thy Hands upon thy Breast, and looking down, as not worthy to look up to Heaven; tho' thou be a Son, yet acknowledge and carry as one unworthy to be a Servant; stay weeping at his Feet, until he be gracious, like the Sinner in *Luke* vii. Take now the lowest Place; let thy Thoughts, Words, Behaviour, Actions and Carriage testifie that thou art as low as thy Sins have made thee: There is a glorious Conceit of our selves, of our Graces, of our Strength; this must be pulled down, and God will stain the Pride of all Flesh. (7.) Let this increase your Opposition to sin more, watch it more narrowly, vow more violently against the Stream of Sin, pray more fervently, hate it more, shun it more, *redeem the Time* that ye have lost, look for some happy Occasion whereby ye may recover your Advantage ye

lost

loſt, and your Diſgrace; run your Race more violently, if caſt behind through Sloth. This it ſpeaks, *This Evil is of the Lord.* God ſaw poſſibly too great a Peace betwixt Sin and you, and ye too gentle in purſuing of Sin; and therefore hath God made Satan and Sin betwixt themſelves oppreſs thee: This is one Way how God puts Enmity betwixt his People and Sin; it bruiſes their Heel, and therefore they ſtrive to break Sin's Head. (8.) It ſays, Be more wary and vigilant; there is no ſleeping Time. (9.) Go on in the Lord's Strength, take Help of him, employ him, go forth in his Name, when thy other Confederates are beat, *Hoſ.* xiii. 9, 10. (10.) It ſaith, *Turn unto the Lord*; if the Thread be broken, bind a Knot again where it is broken, *Hoſ.* xiv. 1. If ye have ſinned, yet continue not in it; come to him therefore with Shame, Sorrow and Grief, *ſince thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquities*, and wait till he be gracious. In a Word, conſider thy Ways, and conſider them until thy Heart be ſuitably affected with Sorrow, Grief, Warineſs, Fear, Humility; and in this Poſture leave off thy Sins; if thou haſt ſinned, do ſo no more; let it ſuffice thee, and do not only leave the Evil, but come unto the Lord, lamenting before him thy

Condition, acknowledging thy Sin and thy Vileneſs, and beg his Pardon for it, as *David* did, when *his Heart ſmote him*; and watch more narrowly againſt thy Sin in Times coming, keeping more cloſe with him, fearing always, waiting on him till he pronounce himſelf, that thou art forgiven, or haſt gotten ſome Aſſurance from his Word or Works, that his Mind is towards thee; and whenever thou canſt, or when it is in the Power of thine Hand, avenge thy ſelf of thine Adverſary, and this do as oft as thou departeſt from him, though thou ſhouldſt ſin a hundred Times a Day, as oft repent and turn; and God who commandeth us to forgive our Brother in ſuch a Caſe, will certainly forgive us: Here is the Work that ye ſhall immediately go about, and do all this. *Laſtly*, With a holy Patience, not haſty in removing out of thy Place, when the Spirit of the Ruler is ſtirred againſt thee, and ſo quitting Duty, but going on in Duty, and that not for a while, but conſtantly, and that not with Diſcouragements, but in Faith, and not with crying murmuring Fears againſt the Lord, but quietly with a meek and quiet Spirit, poſſeſſing your own Spirits this Way, and ſubmitting to the Lord's Will, both in ſuffering thee to ſin, and while thou art

art going about Duty, and poſſibly not getting what thou expects, make no Din, or Stir, or Tumult, there is a holy Patience required; Folk muſt not be too peremptory to have the Meſſenger of *Satan* away, and God muſt not be diſputed with, *Why haſt thou made me thus?* Our murmuring, and not ſubmitting to God, to be guided in any Way, though foul; but being peremptory, may cauſe God lay this Yoke on us, till we ſit ſilently under it: Mourn, I ſay, yet murmure not, grieve at it, but not that it is: Learn to ſee ſome Good in and by Sin. *God be thanked that ye were the Servants of Sin;* comply with the being of Sin, or that Sin ſhould be, becauſe it is God's Will, and good is the Will of the Lord, that hereby thy Heart is humbled, and made baſe, and Occaſion of Glory taken from thee, and that hereby thou becomes more in God's Reverence for Mercy, and art put to the Neceſſity of employing a Saviour for a Pardon, but hate ſtill the Nature of Sin, and grieve for it in other Reſpects: Now do all this quickly; what is next to thy Hand, that do well. Haſt thou ſinned and departed from God? Stand not then tarrying all Day, and making a Noiſe, grieving rather at thy own Abaſement, and

fruſtrating of thy own Reſolutions, than at the real Nature of Sin: But trouble not thy Head with this at all, ſay, *Good is the Will of the Lord.* Here we muſt not ſtay, what is to be done? ſeeing what is done cannot be undone. See if thou now canſt turn unto the Lord, and here's an End. And if thy unbelieving ſophiſtical Heart ſay, Thou art very unfit to turn to God, thou haſt not a mourning Frame, ask thy Heart, What then? I'll do what I can: If the Lord give Mourning, good it is, I deſire it; if not, yet let me give good Words, let me acknowledge my Sin, and do ſo no more; and if I cannot mourn for my Sin, yet let me mourn, that I cannot mourn and ſigh under my hard Heart, and complain at leaſt as they, *Iſai.* lxiii. 17. Oh! but thou art not yet in Covenant with God, nor cannot be, nor enter. Well, yet let me come to him, let me put my ſelf before him, let me not add more Sin by doing what I have done, or omitting any Duty, let me give him the Calves of my Lips; mourn I will under the Power of Sin, looking up to him, and do in the mean time what I can. And this is the Voice of Backſliding.

MEDI-

MEDITATION VIII.

Concerning the Evil of Actual Sins.

IT is a common received Axiom, That nothing can be added to that which is infinite; and yet behold an infinite Evil of sin in the Heart, receiving Addition by actual Outbreakings: sin is intensively infinite in the Heart, and therefore can receive no Addition by the outward Acts, all coming from this evil Treasure and Fountain; yet Sin may receive an extensive relative Addition. No Man is so evil but he may be worse; it were good, that if sin could not be gotten rooted out of the Heart, that it were keeped in there, and not suffer'd to appear in the Conversation. And for this, consider,

1. ACTUAL Sins give Satan a perfect Conquest; the Heart is first poisoned, I mean the Nature of Man, then sin begins to lust in the Affections: This is a further Degree, Satan wants now but the Tongue and Carriage, give him that, and ye com-

pleat him, and Crown his Victory; the Combat is never perfectly won till it overcome the outward Man; while sin is keeped within in Temptation, 'tis a Token there is a resisting Party within, the Battle is not done, no compleat Victory, no Triumph while Satan sets out an open Standard, and Triumphs openly. *Rom.* vi. 12. *James* i. 14, 15.

2. ACTUAL Sins strengthen the Body and Root of sin, I mean the Habits of sin; all Habits are increas'd by their Acts, he that sins actually puts another Link to his Chain: so that *he that is accustomed to do Evil, cannot do Good, Jer.* xiii. 23. Sin doth as it were preserve it self, multiply and increase it self, as the Herbs by shooting out of their seed in Summer, do preserve themselves and increase more. Sin learns Cunning and Readiness by Exercise, outward sins give Life to the inward Habit, it is not altogether to be disallow'd, to mortify sin by Abstinence from the outward Acts, and to keep it from putting forth its seed, *Job* xxxi. 1. And sometimes *by the sadness of the Countenance the Heart is made better.*

3. ACTUAL Sins harden the Heart more in sin, so that the Man's Inclination is not only

only ſtronger, but his Remorſe for ſin is leſs, and becomes not only expert, but more bold in ſinning. Cuſtom in ſin taketh away ſenſe of ſin, he comes now to be impudent; a common Whore is an impudent Creature, hence Hard-heartedneſs is expreſt under the Notion of a *Whore's Forehead.* Hence, when one was troubled for ſome ſin which he had committed, a carnal Man well acquainted with the Trade it ſeems, when he could not get Peace any other way, adviſes him to commit the ſame ſin over again, which he found effectual. And hence, why is it that the Hearts of moſt Profeſſors are not troubled for vain Thoughts, idle Words, Omiſſion or ſlighting of ſome Duties, unchriſtian Carriage? this is one Reaſon among many, They have ſo accuſtomed themſelves with it, that it is a Nature to them, and Men think not ſhame of their Nature, Folk betimes learn to carry the Devil's Yoke, *Heb.* iv. 13. *Jer.* vi. 15.

4. ACTUAL Sins ſtrengthen all other ſins; for as the Root is ſupplied, it diffuſes proportionably its ſap unto all the Branches, ſo when their curſed Root of Bitterneſs is ſupply'd, not only is that particular ſin, but all other ſins are increas'd; there is a Sympathy betwixt the Members of the

Body

Body of Death, and there is some universal Soul in every Sin, in which, as in a general Notion and Spirit, they agree, make one of the Members rejoice, then all rejoice, rejoice one, rejoice all, strengthen one, strengthen all; and hence, in one sin, ye shall see many sins clustered together.

5. GOD is provoked hereby to give up to judicial Plagues of Heart, which is the saddest Judgment. Heart-sins, or sins of Infirmity, bring not on spiritual Judgments, *Deut.* xxviii. 28. Judicial Acts must proceed on proven Dittys; ye never discover nor prove your sin till it come out. Oh! beware of a vain, unprofitable, carnal, unsober Conversation, or else this will be proven. I know *the Lord searches the Heart and judges it*; but remarkable Judgments that the World must notice must be on some outward Guilt, that the Justice of God may be seen. Whatever the Lord doth extraordinarily I now say nothing, but this is his ordinary way. I never knew a Professor fall to open Apostacy that ever made me stumble, because I ever saw something break out in his Conversation like a Comet, portending his Destruction.

6. THE whole Man was never corrupted till now; while thy Heart and Affections were

were only polluted, thy Body was clean: but when thou sins outwardly, thy Body is likewise polluted: Now sin's Borders are enlarged. 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. *Cleanse your selves from the Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit.*

7. THOU hereby discourages thy own Soul very much; thy Hope in the Lord through this new Act of Treason, is weakned and shaken, when possibly thy Mercy was passing the Seals. Actual Sin is the Cause of Discouragement, *Hos.* vii. 1. Heart-plagues that cannot be remedied, though they be Causes of Mourning and of Loathing our selves, and groaning under their Power, yet do not usually discourage, but when sin breaks out we are stricken out of Countenance; hence Unwillingness to approach unto God, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 30. This made the poor Publican stand afar off; *Depart from me, I am a sinful Man.* The Man knows not what to say. *Ezrah* ix. 10. Faint in pursuing of sin: Shall I go forth any more against my Corruptions, saith the Soul? and is afraid to take up Head again: To be beat and overthrown doth not only weaken the Kingdom whose Forces are overthrown, but likewise mightily discourages it, *Josh.* vii. 5. When the Men of *Ai* smote

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the *Israelites*, it is said, *their Hearts fainted, melted, and became as Water.*

8. HENCE murmuring and fretting against God, why hath he suffered me to sin? for the more a Man sins, the more he hateth God. *Prov.* xix. 3. *The Foolishness of a Man perverteth his Way, and his Heart fretteth against the Lord.*

9. TO add no more, actual sins do Evil to others; Heart sins do Evil to your selves, Oh but actual sins in the Conversation grieve the Godly, deadens them, hardens and strengthens the Wicked, rejoices them, confirms them in their way, stains your Profession, rubbing a shame upon it: Hence our Light is to shine, that good Men seeing your good Works may glorifie God, Example hath strong Influence, whether to Good or Evil, *Matth.* v. 10. 1 *Pet.* ii. 12. 1 *Cor.* iv. 17. *Evil Communication corrupteth good Manners.* Which Things may be a great Dissuasive from Filthiness of the Flesh, and if ye can give no more, yet give him the outward Man; 'tis sad when Carnality and sin is written on the outward Man, as well as on the Heart, 'tis a Token it is very strong.

MEDI-

MEDITATION IX.

Of the Vileneſs of Sin.

NOthing ſo vile as ſin, therefore we ſhould abhor it more than any Thing in the World, and our ſelves as ſinful upon this Account. The Vileneſs of ſin will appear, if ye conſider the Names given to ſin and ſinners in Scripture; it is called Filthineſs, Leproſie, Uncleanneſs, Abomination, Corruption. Sinners are called Dogs, Swine, polluted Perſons, menſtruous Clothes; and this ſhows the exceeding Vileneſs and Filthineſs of ſin in the Lord's ſight, as though there were a Concatenation of all Evils in ſin; whatever is vile that is ſin, the moſt ugly loathſome Diſeaſe in the World is not ſo loathſome as ſin is.

2. IT is ſo vile, as when the Lord ſhall diſcover it unto thee, thou ſhalt loathe and abhor it, nay abhor thy ſelf for it, ſo as thou ſhalt not be angry at any Thing that is done unto thee by any Perſon; thou wilt have as low, as baſe Thoughts of thy ſelf as

as any can have; thou ſhalt mourn and grieve, and long to be diſſolved out of this earthly Tabernacle, that thou mayeſt put off this Corruption, and mayeſt be delivered from the Body of Death; thou ſhalt long and ſigh for his Image more than for any Thing elſe in the World; thy vile wretched Heart ſhall be a continual Burden unto thee. Hence, when the Heart is truly drawn unto the Lord it abhors it ſelf. If thou hadeſt a loathſome Diſeaſe running upon thee, ſo as thou couldeſt not abide the Sight of any Friend nor Relation, for thy loathſome Savour to ſee or come near thee, how miſerable wouldeſt thou judge thy ſelf to be then? Oh! but the Vileneſs of ſin is another kind of Vileneſs which the Lord ſees, and when thou art in his Light thou ſhalt ſee it likewiſe.

3. Sin is vile, if ye conſider the fearful Torments of the Damned, and yet they deſerve it all; they are more vile than they are miſerable, and their Miſery in their Vileneſs is greater than their Miſery of Pain is. The fearfulleſt, loathſomeſt, monſtruouſeſt ſight, ugly, loathſome, abominable Spectacle that ever will be ſeen, or can be ſeen, is a Soul polluted with ſin, and not waſhen by the Blood of Chriſt.

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4. A Sinner is so vile God cannot look upon him, God cannot, will not keep Communion with his own People, unless they be holy, and therefore sanctifies them ere he will keep Company with them, which shows the Filthiness of sin.

5. SIN is a Privation of God's Image, which is Holiness; the soul is made capable of the Image of God; God being above all in Might, Wisdom and Holiness, must be so in Beauty and Glory: Now what is that? even his Righteousness and Holiness. This is the Beauty of the Lord, and that wherein and whereby God is most resembled. Hence Man's greatest Perfection and Happiness did consist in his similitude to God; this was the greatest Beauty imaginable, and the Loss of this was Man's unspeakable Misery. Now, the simple Negation of a Thing makes not the Thing ugly, but the Privation of it: A stone wants Holiness as well as a damned Reprobate, yet is not the stone vile, because the stone is not capable of this. Man's Holiness was his greatest Glory, Beauty and Excellency; hence wanting this, he is most vile, most monstruous and deformed. That Woman that is Fabled to have a Sow's Head, or to want a Nose, was an horrible spectacle; a

Soul

Soul that required as its Perfection the Image of God, and to want this muſt needs render that Soul very deformed, and muſt needs want a great Lake. If the ſoul were not capable of the Image of God, the want of the Image of God were no Monſtruoſity or Deformity to it. Sin is a disfiguring of the moſt excellent Creature, and ye know *corruptio optimi peſſima*, the more excellent the Form be which the ſubject wants, the more deformed the ſubject without that Form.

6. In Sin there is a Concatenation of all Evils; ſin is Folly, and nothing more deſpiſed, loathed or contemned than a Fool; there is in ſin Unkindneſs, and God hath ſtamped in the very Nature of Man a greater Diſtaſte of this Sin than of any other, *ſi ingratum dixeris omnia dixeris. Do ye thus requite the Lord? I have brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me.* In ſin there is Deceitfulneſs and Treachery, and therefore the Lord's Faithfulneſs abhors it. In every ſin there is Weakneſs, and therefore the Lords Power is againſt it; in every ſin there is Baſeneſs, and therefore the high and lofty One cannot abide it; in every ſin there is Enmity againſt God, and there-

therefore the Lord cannot away with it. Many other Conſiderations might be added.

MEDITATION X.

Concerning the Evil of Sin.

THERE are two great Duties incumbent upon all Chriſtians, that is, to hate Evil, and to do Good: Ere we can hate the Evil, we muſt have the Evil rightly repreſented unto us; if Sin were rightly repreſented unto us, and we had Eyes to ſee it, we needed not many Motives to this; but let us conſider,

1. Separation from God is a very natural Effect of Sin, thou lives Days, Months, Years without God, which is the greateſt Curſe of the Damned, thou haſt prayed without him, heard without him, meditated without him, thy Soul is in Darkneſs, becauſe the Sun of Righteouſneſs is ſet; Now why is all this Evil come? Oh! look upon thy Way, the Lord's Spirit is not ſtraitned, his Hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, his Ear is not heavy

that he cannot hear, his Bowels of Compaſſion are not waxed old; no, he is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever; what then? thy Sins have ſeparated betwixt him and thee, the Hand of *Joab* is in all this, this is the Fruit of thy evil Ways; Is this a Bitterneſs unto thee? Is this an Evil? Then it is the Reward of thine Iniquities; ſee the Greatneſs of the Evil of thy Sin ſtamped in the Greatneſs of thy Judgments.

2. They occaſion not only ſpiritual Evils, but they occaſion and cauſe temporal Evils, thy Eſtate is waſted, thy Credit gone, thy Comforts are taken away, thy Enemies are ſtrong, and thy Perſecutors ſwift; and the Lord's Hand is in all Things againſt thee, ſo as thou art brought down wonderfully; gad not Abroad in vain to ſeek inferior Cauſes of it, there is one Wheel that hath ſet all theſe Wheels on Work, the Cry of thy Iniquity is come up before the Lord: Wickedneſs burneth as an Oven, and as a Fire, 'tis a conſuming Thing. Sin and Judgment are nearly related, they are inſeparable, it is big with Child of Vengeance, it brings forth Death, when it is brought forth, Men know not that they take a

Coal

Coal in their Bosom, when they bear their Sins, think not thou hast done with the Business, when thou hast done with thy Sin, it hath a sad go down; stay, take in likewise its Usher, that is Judgment; thou hast wrought thy Work, thou must get thy Wages; what dost thou mad Man, when thou sins, when thy Heart departs from God, when thou omits Duty, when thou talks idly, when thou goes lightly, or swears, &c? but draws down Wrath on thy Soul, wastes thy Estate, brings Dishonour on thy Name, brings thee under the Drop of Judgment; they who separate and prescind Sin and Judgment, are bad Theologues, and bad Christians, when thou bears thy Judgments, groans under them, thou bears thy Sins according to God. To fall in Sin, is all one in Effect, as to fall in Judgment; to sin, is a quick Way, and a sure Way to Ruin; Sin is a Path Road to Destruction; Sin is a strong pleading Advocate for Vengeance, and prevails much with Justice.

3. Cast thine Eyes to Hell for a while, and behold damned Creatures boiling in a Cauldron of Fire and Brimstone: Lay thine Ear and hear their blasphemous Scriechings and Howlings, conceive in thy

Heart what it is, if there be a Demonſtration a *Poſteriori*; ſee what Sin is. Is Hell an Evil? Is Hell a Jeſt? What thinks *Judas* of his thirty Pieces of Silver? what thinks the Worldling now of his Contempt of God and Chriſt? Doth the Fool in Hell make a Jeſt of Sin, as he did in Earth? Are Oaths then a ſmall Matter? Are Lies, Drunkenneſs, nothing but a Sickneſs after, or a Qualm of Conſcience? Damnation is not an Act of Sovereignty, though Reprobation be; 'tis an Act of Juſtice, 'tis Meaſure for Meaſure, Hell is no Overplus of Reward. To be eternally ſeparate from the moſt bleſſed Face of God in Chriſt: Under God's eternal Curſe, and fearful Hatred, ſo as never to hear a good Word from him, to be weltering irremedileſly under infinite Vengeance, this is unſpeakable; but indeed, it is nothing but holy, holy Juſtice, not one Grain Weight of Cruelty; there is as much an Evil in Sin, as in all this; what is Hell then? the Fruit of Sin; beware of Sin, 'tis to go to Hell, Sin is the Door and Way to Hell. Is Hell a great Evil? why? 'tis proportioned to Sin; a great Puniſhment argues a great Fault; Hell's too good for a Sinner againſt God, he is unworthy of any Thing elſe,

elſe, he is only fitted to hold Wrath: Read in the Damned's Torments the Evil of Sin; what is't that torments in Hell? the ſweet Draughts of Sin that they ſwallowed without Fear, are now working like a living Serpent gnawing their Heart.

4. God exactly notices Sin, and that which God firſt minds in every Man is, whether they did Right or Ill; and doſt thou think he minds Trifles? he ſees Sin, obſerves it, remembers, condemns it, threatens it, is angry at it, puniſhes it; nay, is very ſerious in it, 'tis not a deſpicable Thing in the Lord's Sight: Sin has a loud Cry, when it reaches God, is big, when the lofty one ſees it; nay, no Evil to it: Why? then to ſin, is to make God your Party; thou mayſt ſin quietly, true, but this will come to a publick Debate before the World; a ſerious Matter it is therefore, 'tis no Jeſt then to ſin, Men run a deeper Hazard than they are aware; nay, or can be well conceived, when they ſin; Evils againſt God are great Evils, to ſin in his Sight againſt him and his Honour, is no Jeſt, nor a light Matter, it draws very deep: God as an Enemy is a ſad Relative.

5. CHRIST coming into the World to dy for Sinners, to ſave them from Sin is a ſtrong Demonſtration, and ſpeaks out very much the Evil of Sin; what a great Matter was this? How much of divine Wiſdom was ſpent, that I may ſo ſpeak, in contriving that unſpeakable Myſtery, God made Man? what a Nine Days? what an eternal Wonder is this? to the Son of God to make a Journey from Heaven, to take on him the Form of a Servant, to be abaſed, nay to give his Life; what great Matter is this? Here was the Reſult of the eternal and infinitely wiſe Counſel in Heaven? what was all this to? How! to ſave the loſt World, to condemn Sin in the Fleſh; what brought thee Lord Jeſus to bow ſo low, to come from ſuch a Height to ſuch a Deep? Oh Sin! what made thy Back, as it were, to bow and ſtand in Need of the Comfort of an Angel? ay! imputed Sin: What great Errand had this wonderful and great One from Heaven to Earth? what Buſineſs was he tranſacting here; ſure, he would not give the Travel of his Soul for nought, he would ware no more than Reaſon required, it was not a groundleſs Conceit or a Fancy. Oh no! it was to deliver from Sin, Chriſt thought not

not his Pains ill wared to condemn Sin, no leſs would do it than Chriſt, Trifles did not take him up; nay, what is the End of all Providences, Convictions, Croſſes, Word, Miniſters? either to puniſh Sin, or to take away from Sin. Oh! Sin is another Buſineſs than moſt take it to be; God and the World have different Thoughts of Sin; I tell you, the greateſt Mercy can be ſhewed to thee, is to deliver thee from thy Sins. Sin is the only Evil; and therefore, it is all evil; Sin is Hell, is Death, is Judgment, is Separation from God; take away ſin, and there is no Evil: As there is nothing Good ſeparate from God; ſo there is nothing Evil but ſin; ſin hath a ſtrange and near Relation to all Evils, 'tis the univerſal Spirit of all Evils, 'tis their Soul, the Quinteſſence of a little God, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all theſe Evils; there was no Evil before ſin, but all Goodneſs; ſin came, and brought all Evil imaginable with it; and where ſin is, there cannot be but Evil: Look to all Evils outward, inward, and ſin is the Sting of them, ſin is the Seed of all Evils.

6. A neceſſary Concatenation there is betwixt ſin and Miſery; Scripture is clear in this, ſin is ſure Earneſt and Arles of Puniſhment:

niſhment: God hath ordained them, and coupled them together by an invincible Chain of an immutable, ſure, and eternal Decree; 'tis impoſſible to ſeparate them, he hath coupled them in his Word, though Hand go in Hand, it ſhall not be unpuniſhed; God's Nature and Glory is, by no Means to clear the guilty: Nay, Though it were his Son Jeſus Chriſt that was a Sinner only imputatively, his Soul muſt be heavy unto Death, Death is the Wages of ſin; if ye ſow the Wind and Iniquity, ye ſhall reap Vanity, and the Whirl-wind: The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs, and Unrighteouſneſs of Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs. God's wronged Glory and Law, to which he hath greateſt Reſpect, hath a mighty loud effectual Cry for Juſtice; it is not a Trifle that the Lord will paſs away with, the ſinner hath Wrath in Hand, thou art a dead Man, aſſoon as *Adam* ſinned, in that Day he died; expect Puniſhment as the Wages of ſin, as certainly, as ye expect the ſame Grain from what ye ſow; as ye ſow, ſo ſhall ye reap; then 'tis juſt all one to draw on Guilt, as to draw on Wrath; never one yet, but found ſin a ſad Buſineſs, he repented

repented of it, never a Sin but hath Repentance after it; 'tis impossible, but these Pills will work, though the Lord spare long, yet he will at last recompense it: And this he doth in the Lord's own People, whose Sins are pardoned in the Blood of Christ; yet doth he take Vengeance of their Inventions, to beat a Slave, a Servant is no Wonder: Oh! but to beat his dear Child, and that so sadly and heavily; 'tis much that draws this out of him, for he grieves not willingly; hope not then to get Pardon without Grief for Sin, 'tis in vain, ye will ever find the Evil of it, ere the Lord pardon it.

7. SIN is the greatest of all Evils, Afflictions are nothing to sin; I tell you, sin is a greater Evil than Hell it self, Christ endured the penal Part of Hell, but would not sin; no Angel in Heaven but would rather leap to a River of God's Wrath, than to sin. This is the great Curse of the Damned, that they are never freed from their sins; this is Hell in Hell, the Load that weighs heaviest, and their greatest Misery. It is the Elects greatest Mercy that they shall be presented *without Spot or Wrinkle*; this is the great Blessing to be delivered from sin, 'tis a Gift worth the Bounty and Blood

Blood of Christ. This is the saddest Word ever was spoken, *Ye shall die in your Sins.* The sweetest Name Christ hath, is to save from sin: Oh! sin hath a deep Dye, that nothing can take away but the Blood of the Son of God.

8. SIN is against God, sin takes its Evil from the Object it is against, that is God: How against God? 'Tis adulterous departing from God; Adultery is vile among Men, *Shall not the Land be greatly polluted?* But shall not Heaven and Earth be astonished and tremble at Adultery against God? 'Tis Treason and Rebellion against God, Treason is Death against the King by the Law, what is Rebellion against God? sin is Grieving, Killing, and Burdening to him; 'tis *Deicidium*; if God could be hurt sin would do it; 'tis a crushing and trampling under Foot his Glory and Authority, and will he not glorify his Law, think you, and have Respect to it? Is it nothing to deface the Image of That? To be guilty of Adultery against him, to rebel against him, to break his Law, and trample his Authority? Or doest thou think, because through Custom thou hast hardened thy Conscience, that therefore thy sin is become less though it seems less to thee? Or because Judg-

ment

ment is not execute, therefore it will never be; no, no, he reserveth Wrath. These are great Evils; Time, Sin and Eternity, and other Miseries, will never eat them out of God's Heart; *I will never forget any of your Works*: Nothing but the Blood of Christ; get this applied to your Souls and ye are safe; or if not, know to Hell ye must go without Remedy: God must act like himself, sins against him are great sins.

9. SIN is an everlasting Evil, it sticks for ever: Eternity, if ye die in sin, will not wash it away.

MEDITATION XI.

Inferences and Uses from the Consideration of the Evil of Sin.

1. HENCE see what an Evil sin is. (1.) It is a most vile Evil, it is abominable, 'tis Filthiness, 'tis a Disease, 'tis Uncleanness, God cannot look upon it; sinners in the Lord's sight are but Vipers, Toads, vile Persons, Serpents, Leprous, sick,

sick, unprofitable, corrupt ones; loathed, hated, despised, rejected of him; and this is so really and certainly, for he minds not Flourishes of Rhetorick. Oh sinners! your Glory is your shame; loathe then thy self, and walk humbly with God. Nothing so vile as sin, no Misery like unto it. (2.) It is a strong Evil, a remedileſs Evil, it is like the *Ethiopian*'s Blackness that cannot be washen away; no Power in Heaven or in Earth can take away or subdue sin, but only Jesus Christ; sin's Bands are strong. Groan under this Evil, not only that thou art sinful, but that thou canst not but sin, canst not know God, canst not see, canst not feel thy sins, mourn under them, see the Evil of them, and forsake them. (3.) It is a most deceitful Evil, not only strong, but crafty and cunning, nay, *deceitful above all Things*; nay, so deceitful, as none can know it: see a Need therefore of the Wisdom of Jesus to lead thee against thy Enemies, 'tis a Point in which God's Almighty Wisdom is seen very much; *I know the Heart, I the Lord know it.* Be jealous then, and suspicious over your Hearts, fear them, look well to them, be not confident. (4.) Sin is a most Tyrannical Evil, not only vile, base, strong deceitful, but desperately Wicked; sin hath

no

no Reason with it, it will hear none at all, but drives on violently, as the Horse doth unto the Battle, hath no Moderation nor Sobriety, but is violent, goes without Bounds, keeps the Soul in Fear and Bondage, rides Post, oppresses sore; sin is most cruel, it destroys the Soul despitefully. (5.) A dangerous Evil in respect of what it threatens, a mortal, eternal and unexpressible Misery; dangerous in respect of the Multitude that perish by sin, that are led to Hell, Hood-wink'd as it were. (6.) Sin is a real Evil, all that's spoken of Sin are not Flowers of Rhetorick, no, 'tis really so; Sin is an Evil indeed, and Folk shall find it so. (7.) It is a prejudicial Evil, it hath doleful Consequences, it hath a doleful Way-going; Death, Judgment, and eternal Wrath wait at sin's Door behind it; sin is but a Door to all Miseries, sin hath Punishment waiting on it, and sooner or latter it will be bitter: There is not such a Thing as sin alone. (8.) It is a certain Evil, 'tis Bitterness, 'tis Death, 'tis sure Arles of Misery, an infallible Forerunner that never mist a necessary Cause of it: It is in vain then to think of shunning a Stroke for sin; Be who thou wilt, God's Word is sure that hath knit both inseparably together. (9. 'Tis a weighty

weighty serious Evil, considered by God, remembred by him; it hath done great Things, it is not a Matter of Jest, as Fools count it to be; Folk shall find sin Matter of good sad Earnest one Day: How so? It is Adultery against God, 'tis Rebellion against him, 'tis grieving of his Spirit, 'tis departing from him, 'tis destroying of your own Souls, 'tis falling under the Compass of eternal and infinite Misery, it reaches as deep as Hell, as deep as the Death of Christ; as high as the Power, Care, Wisdom, Wrath, and special Providence of God: Therefore to be thought on with great Attention, and to be seriously affected with; for it is no sport, no Bairn's Play. (10.) 'Tis not only prejudicial, but most prejudicial; sin's Evils are unsufferable, unspeakable, and seldom believed till they come to pass; sin will always be very bitter. (11.) The very Nature of sin is Evil: What is that? 'Tis to depart from God, 'tis to despise and contemn God's Authority; 'tis to make the sinner most vile, and to cast him down from his Excellency, to rob him of his Beauty. (12.) Sin doth ill to others, 'tis an infectious extending Evil, it grieves and hardens others. (13.) Sin is the greatest Evil; not only an Evil, nor a great Evil,

but

but the greateſt Evil. (14.) It is the only Evil, and therefore all Evils, that ever come upon us, it is either for ſin, to prevent ſin, or to take away ſin. Sin is a main and neceſſary Ingredient in all Puniſhment. *Mic.* i. 5. *For the Iniquity of* Jacob *is all this.* (15.) It is an everlaſting Evil, that continues for ever. (16.) It is the Evil of the Soul, a ſpiritual Evil, and therefore moſt abominable; the Redemption of the Soul of Man is precious, and it ceaſeth for ever (17.) It is againſt God, againſt his Image, his Authority, Love, Kindneſs, Providence, People, Will, Laws, Honour and Majeſty. (18.) It hath done much Evil, caſt down Angels to Hell, defaced the whole Creation, making it to groan under its Load, humbled Chriſt even unto Death. In a Word, all the Woe that ever was done, was done by Sin.

Uſe 2. HENCE ſee the Madneſs, Blindneſs and Stupidity of the World; blind they are when they cannot ſee ſuch a big Mountain as this that fills the whole Earth, dead and ſenſeleſs that cannot feel this heavy Weight, that caſt the Son of God down to Hell; mad and Fools that are not taken up with this, but will venture boldly on God's ſore Diſpleaſure. Is it Wiſdom to meddle with this Serpent? Is it

Wiſdom

Wisdom to open the Door to Hell? Is it Wisdom to bring all Evil upon thee? Art thou not serving for Death, destroying thy own Soul, and that eternally; and yet wilt'st not consider. To drink a Cup of Poison, and laugh when thou hast done, is no Sign of a wise Man.

3. HENCE see what an evil Thing the World is; it is cursed by the Lord, 'tis God's Enemy, 'tis polluted with sin, Transgressions are heavy upon it, they ly in sin, the World now is sin's Bait, sin's *Pander* to court to it; it is the Devil's old Bawd, the Portion of wicked Men, God's Enemy, his People's Enemy, that is to be burnt with Fire, the Stage of sin, and so consequently of Misery; the Devil's Walk and Kingdom, the God of this World, whose Wisdom, Riches, and greatest Glory are abominable in the Lord's sight, *Luke* xvi. 15.

4. LET us be suitably affected with sin as the greatest Evil, fear it terribly, hate it very vehemently, be at great Distance with it, *put away Iniquity far from us*, let the Thoughts of it be most terrible unto us, mourn bitterly and seriously for it, watch strictly against it, pray fervently and mightily to the Lord, to deliver thee from the Power and Evil of it; come not near it, bide

bide from it as from Death and Hell, think no ſin a ſport, Sirs; reſiſt it, not in Jeſt, elſe it will damn you in Earneſt, think no Pains much, nor no Coſt great, to get thy ſin down.

5. HERE is Matter of Lamentation, Sorrow, Bitterneſs and Humiliation, and walking ſoftly: Oh! conſider what an Evil ye are encompaſt with when thou looks on this, and what thou haſt done; Oh! mourn, grieve, groan, and be in great Bitterneſs, cry out of this Body of Death.

6. HENCE ſee the doleful, lamentable, vile, terrible and fearful Eſtate that every Man is in by Nature; a Natural Condition is a ſad Eſtate, it is an Eſtate of Sin, and Vileneſs, and Uncleanneſs, a monſtruous Condition, polluted with the unſpeakable Venom of ſin; it is Death it ſelf; to ly in Nature, is to ly in the Bands of Death; 'tis a ſtate of Bondage to ſin, to Satan, and our own Luſts, a fearful ſtrong Priſon; it is a ſtate of Blindneſs and Darkneſs; it is a ſtate of Separation from God, it is a ſtate of Enmity to God, 'tis a ſtate of Condemnation, Sentence hath paſt againſt thee of eternal Vengeance: It is a curſed Eſtate.

7. HENCE see the Cause and Fountain of all Evils that come upon you; sin is the first Evil, shun sin, and ye shun all Evil.

8. SEE how just the Lord is and righteous in punishing of sin, whether here or eternally; I tell you, it is not only lawful for him, but it is Righteousness in him so to do; the Glory of his Justice and Holiness shines in it, as well as of his Sovereignty; Damnation is a most holy, pure, and righteous Action; the Punishment is not above the Fault; it is fit, that thou who didst trample on God, he should trample upon thee: Sin is an infinite Evil, and therefore notice, infinite Punishment must follow it. *Let no living Man complain.*

9. COMPLAIN not then against the Lord, for any Thing that comes upon thee, it is the Punishment of thy sin; but submit unto it, accept of it as a most righteous Thing, thy self hath procur'd it.

10. SEE hence the Impossibility of satisfying God by thy Duties, Repentance, or Reformation. Where hast thou to satisfy? What wilt thou bring of thine own to repair this infinite Breach? Canst thou make

God

God Amends? Canst thou repair a Wrong done against God? Hast thou an infinite Satisfaction to give? Thy Goodness doth not extend to him, as thy sin hath done. What is thy Life to him? Is it worth the Wrong done? What are thy Works that thou shouldest notice it? Will they weigh as far down, as thy Sin? Thou hast trampled God under Foot by thy sin, and this is worse than that all the World should burn in Hell.

11. See hence the Necessity of fleeing unto the Blood of Christ, this City of Refuge, only in him is help, only in him thou canst find a Remedy; *haste therefore, and flee for thy Life, lest the Avenger of Blood overtake thee*; Wo unto thee for ever, if not in him, he only can open this sealed Book.

12. Hence see the infinite Love of God, and the Power of his Mercy, in sending a Saviour to die for Sinners, in pardoning, subduing, and forgetting such an Evil as this; Mercy is high that comes over such Mountains.

13. Hence see the great Excellency of Holiness and Obedience; if sin be the greatest Evil, then Holiness must be the greatest Good; if sin be Death, Holiness is Life; if sin be a Bondage, Holiness is

Liberty. Oh! the World sees not the Glory of Holiness.

14. How precious ought this to make Christ unto us, who came to take away this infinite Evil; no Saviour can save from sin but only he; he is the most useful, the most suitable Object that our Souls in this Case can pitch upon; cry after him therefore as the one Thing, welcome him as the greatest Good, mourn and sorrow for thy want of him, esteem him above all Things, see the infinite Worth and Excellency of his Blood, Oh! remember it cleanseth from all sins, cry to none but him.

15. Long for Heaven then, where only thou shalt be free altogether of this sin; it is a Rest from sin, and all Temptations to sin, and Punishment for sin.

16. See the Security and Atheism even of the best; Oh! none considers sin as it is indeed, none are so sensibly affected with it as it deserves; mourn ye Saints, that ye mourn no more for sin.

17. See hence and wonder at the Long-suffering Patience of God, which hath suffered and endured thee and others, and hath not cut thee off, notwithstanding thou hast been so vile, cry out that it is of his Mercy thou art not consumed.

Lastly,

Lastly, Be exceeding thankful, ye that are in part freed from, ye whose Eyes have seen this Evil, groaned under, mourned for, loathed, and been delivered from the Power of it: Oh! I tell you this is no small Mercy, thou art delivered in part from the greatest Evil; thy greatest Enemy hath gotten its dead Stroke, and thou shalt one Day be altogether free from it.

MEDITATION XI.

Of the Combat betwixt the Flesh and Spirit.

THE Apostle *Paul* having, by several Arguments, vindicated the Holiness and Justice of the Law, from the Aspersions that the Believers Deadness thereunto, and the irritating Power thereof through sin might occasion to be laid upon it; he brings one Argument from himself, to prove that the Law was good, which was, That his best Part, his renewed Part, did approve of the Law, and that his unregenerate Part did rebel against it; which was

a manifeſt Token that the Law in it ſelf was good. From thence he takes Occaſion to ſpeak of the Combat betwixt the Fleſh and Spirit, his renewed Part, and unrenewed Part, largely from *Rom.* vii. 15. to the End of the Chapter, and briefly Epitomized in *Gal.* v. 17. in which you have theſe Truths conſiderable.

1. In every Believer there is Fleſh and Spirit, there is two diſtinct and contrary Intereſts, the Intereſt of Sin, of Fleſh, and of the World, and the Intereſt of Chriſt; there is Life and Death, Sin and Grace, Fleſh and Spirit, *Gal.* v. 17. *A Law in the Members fighting againſt the Law in the Mind*; unregenerate Perſons have no Intereſt but the Intereſt of Satan and of the Fleſh, the Saints in Heaven have no Intereſt, in them, but the Lord's only; the Saints militant have two Intereſts, look as it was ſaid to *Rebekah*, *There are two Nations in thy Belly*; even ſo may it be ſaid to every Chriſtian, there are two Nations in his Heart, and the Younger ſhall prevail; God thinks it fit not to deſtroy all at once, but by little and little, that Grace may appear and be exerciſed, and Heaven may be Heaven, and *Saints become perfect through ſuffering*, 1 *John* i. 10. *Rom.* vii. 23. *Phil.* iii.

iii. 12. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21. The Lord hath prepared a Crown for them, win it therefore they must by Fighting. 1 *Pet.* i. 6, 7. How shall they fight without an Enemy? Perfection here therefore is a Dream; *Paul* had not attained to Perfection, *Phil.* iii. 12. *James* had not attained this State, *James* iii. 2. *Prov.* xx. 9. *Eccl.* vii. 20.

2. THESE two Intereſts do not ſit ſtill, but reſiſt, fight, oppoſe, and claſh one againſt another; the Devil, the World and the Fleſh are on one ſide, and Chriſt, with the Spirit and Grace on the other. Two different Nations in *Rebekah's* Womb made ſtruggling, Enemies cannot agree, different Natures cannot agree, *Michael* and the *Dragon* muſt fight when they meet, publickly and privately, inwardly and outwardly, great Feud muſt break out, and cannot keep, every Thing ſeeks the Deſtruction of its Contrary, if no War, then it is a Token the ſtrong Man keeps all in Peace, there is but one Intereſt; wonder not ye that find it ſo, two Nations are in your Hearts, it muſt be ſo, join with Chriſt then, 1 *Pet.* ii. 11. there is nothing for it but Fighting, kill or be kill'd.

3. This Fighting continues until Death, or our Time here is a Warfare; it is in

Heaven *the Spirits of just Men are made perfect*, Heb. xii. 23. while we are here, *we are Strangers and Pilgrims*, and therefore will have *Lusts that war against the Soul*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. *Paul* never concludes he had done with his Fighting, until he knew *the Time of his Departure was at Hand*, 1 Tim. iii. 6, 7, 8. The last Enemy is Death, Death doth deliver us from *this Body of Death*, *Rom.* vii. 24. *Eccl.* vii. 20. *There is not a just Man living on Earth that sinneth not; be faithful therefore unto the Death*, sleep not, having done all, stand.

4. The principal Seat of War in the unregenerate Part is the *Flesh*, called therefore a *Law in the Members*, the sensitive brutal Part in Man, therefore called a Law in our Members; *pluck out the right Eye and right Hands, mortifie your Members on Earth*, Col. iii. 5. Then, (1.) Our Enemies are very near interested in us, our Flesh, our Members, our Eyes, our Hands, deny our selves we must, *Mark* viii. 34. (2.) The Combat then is very painful and difficult; crucifie the Flesh and Affections thereof; 'tis like the pulling out of a Man's right Eye, *Mark* ix. 43. it is like the destroying and paining our own Soul. (3.) It will need great Courage and Fortitude, and the Hatred

Hatred must be deep that will venture against a Man's own self; have Salt therefore in your selves, *Mark* ix. 49, 50. There must be a fiery Indignation in you; this is the Fire the Holy Ghost doth baptize with. (4.) Oppose therefore the Flesh, watch, pray, resist it, *Col.* iii. 5. (5.) It is the baseſt Part, the weakeſt Part that ye have to do with, called therefore *Members on Earth*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 2. called *Fleshly Lusts*, disdain that your earthly Part should abuse you. (6.) A base Thing it is therefore to be subject to such a Slave, a Servant of Servants.

5. The principal Seat of the renewed Man is in the Will and Estimation; I consent, that the Law is good and holy, *To will is present with me, but how to do I know not, and what I do I allow not.* Ye cannot do the Things ye would, fleshly Lusts war against the Soul: I know the Will is in Part parted, but this is through the Flesh, and there appears more of Grace in the Will than in the sensitive Part, and therefore the Denomination is taken from the better Part. Hence, first try your Estates, what saith your Wills and Estimations to Sin and Christ?

(6.) It is a Christian's Wisdom to distinguish these Two, and to lay the Blame where

where the Blame is, and to free himself of this; *it is not I, but Sin in me*, saith *Paul*; hence do not look on the unregenerate Part as your selves, but as your Enemy, *not I*; these Two must be exactly distinguished. (1.) Distinction breeds Clearness, while Confusion breeds Dimness; God at first separated Light from Darkness; if our Enemies be among our Friends we cannot fight so well, we know not whom to fight with, or what to do. (2.) This will breed Comfort and Peace, when ye can say, It is not I, but sin in me; as *Abigail* said to *David*, *Regard not the Foolishness of* Nabal, so say unto the Lord, I the renewed Part am not guilty of this, regard not the Foolishness of the Flesh, slay not the Righteous with the Wicked. (3.) When you go to fight ye must not look on your fleshly Part as your self, but as a Stranger in Rebellion; and this will give Comfort; and therefore, deal with it as a Stranger, say we have no Part in it, if ye look on it as Bone of your Bone, and Flesh of your Flesh, it will breed too much warmness. Hence, when outward Afflictions comes, submit, why so? 'tis the Flesh that suffers, not the spirit. (5.) When Threatnings are inflicted; such as, *Except ye repent, ye shall perish*;

perish; 'tis not to the renewed Part that this is said, 'tis to the unregenerate Part, for that is carried by Love, the other must be boasted. (6.) When you would know what it is to be under the Law, 'tis the Flesh that's under the Covenant of works, the unregenerate Part, not the spirit, which is above the Law in that Consideration; 'tis a servant, a Glass, and a Delight unto the renewed Part; but 'tis a Bondage, a Ministration of Death to the unrenewed Part: Terrifie, threaten, judge, punish the Flesh, cause it serve; but comfort and rejoice the spirit; the regenerate Part is a Law unto it self, and uses the Law, but is not under it formally, *viz. as a Covenant of Works*, but yet is under a Law of Grace. (7.) 'Tis because of the Flesh we mourn, grieve, fear, and seek Forgiveness, which being under the Covenant of works, is liable to the Curse, and to Condemnation; and as thus considered, we are to mourn, grieve, fear, and seek Forgiveness; but as under Grace, we are to rejoice, love, and apply, and believe Forgiveness.

7. THE Flesh and Law of sin and Death, may so far prevail against the Law of the Mind, as to lead it captive, and for a while overcome: *Paul* saw and found this; it

was

was said of *Gad*, A Troop shall prevail and fight, but he shall prevail at last; the House of *David* fought against the House of *Saul*, and became stronger at last, yet *Saul* chased him at first: The Experience of the saints may witness this; this is the Chance of war, sometimes the one Party hath the better, and sometimes the other, 'tis fit that sin's Power, and our own weakness be felt, that we may depend on the Lord, and on his Power; the Lord uses sin, to break the Power of selfish Confidence; despair not then, though sin sometimes overcome, but get up with double Courage and Resolution, never give over; sin is not a peaceable Conqueror, sin takes all in by storm, seldom by Composition.

8. THAT however sin opposes God very much, yet in nothing so much, as when it comes to Action; therefore, the saints find it easie to groan under sin, to hate sin, to resolve against sin; but how to do they know not, *and then Evil is present, ye cannot do the Things ye would*, Gal. v. 17. Doing brings most Glory to God, and most Good to others; therefore, sin will oppose this; Doing doth really most Evil to sin, this wounds sin, crucifies sin, now the Flesh is touch'd as it were to the Quick. Doing is

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in a Manner the Victory, the End of all Preparation; therefore, sin will fight against this, as Men strive for the Victory, there is never grappling indeed, until it come to this, nor fighting: A Man hath most Comfort in this, and this sticks to him. Then, (1.) Think not much, nor be very confident, though ye find your Hearts risen against sin, to resolve against it; for sin doth not strive against this, Soldiers brag and boast, when they are in their Quarters; but when it comes to Hand-strokes, there is Opposition. (2.) Labour therefore to do; content not your selves till it come to this. (3.) 'Tis more excellent to do, and better than to resolve. (4.) Hence see, why Men are frank in their Resolutions, and slack in doing, the Reason is, here Sin opposes most.

9. THIS Combat is very serious and earnest, 'tis no jesting with them at all, a deadly Enmity there is; and therefore, a mortal Quarrel; Wit, Parts, Moyen, Power, Means, and all Shifts are used; hence waiting, praying, mourning, watching, groaning, waiting against it; *Paul* was in good Earnest, when he said, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death?* 'Tis not for

for the first Blood, 'tis the Death of one another they are seeking: It is not a Stage-play, I so fight, not as one that beateth the Air, but I keep under my Body, and bring it unto Subjection, saith *Paul*: Try it therefore by this; be resolute, and in good Earnest against Sin, for no less will do it.

MEDITATION XII.

By what Acts is the Flesh resisted and mortified.

THERE is not a Christian living, but can show by woful Experience, that there is a Combat betwixt the Flesh and Spirit, the Parties against whom the Spirit fights, are the Devil, the World and the Flesh, the carnal Trinity, self being the great God of the World, the Bait through whom all Things are, and the Devil (like the Holy Ghost) applying all; Self is the diseased Man that cries for his own Destruction, the World is the poisoned Plaister,

Plaister, and the Devil and his Instruments are the Physician; the Dragon and his Angels against *Michael* and his Angels, opposing others continually and desperately, publickly and privately, outwardly and inwardly. The Acts then by which the Spirit of Christ doth oppose Satan and the Flesh, are

1. The Soul sees a Law in its Members, warring against the Law of its Mind; look as the Understanding was the Door through which all Evil comes in; so must it be the Door through which all Good comes; therefore, this being the first Porch through which Entrance must be made unto the Heart, Will and Affection, here therefore Light must come in: Light was the first Thing that was created in the World; and so is it in the spiritual Creation: Therefore the Lord lights a Candle to let the Soul see to work; and hence the Evil, the Power, the Tyranny, the Prejudice of the Flesh is seen; and if all the Powers of Hell could hinder it, this would not be, hereupon the Vanity of the World is discovered. *Psal.* xxxix. 6. And hence it is contemned, a Necessity there is of resisting this.

2. Divine

2. DIVINE Light being still operative and lively, it descends next unto the Affections, and there Springs, there it kindles them, they reveal the Vanity of the World, makes the Heart contemn and despise it, the revealed Prejudice and Hazard makes the Heart fear, grieve and mourn, and the revealed Power and Tyranny, and Despite of Sin makes the Soul groan and sigh, and complain, and look up to Heaven: When the Believer and sin first yokes, sin prevails, and is too strong, and the poor Believer groans, mourns and sighs under this hard Bondage: And all the Resistance that's now made is Sense, the Burden is felt, and laid to Heart, the Evil is not only seen, but felt. *Rom.* vii. 24.

3. HEREUPON the Soul is filled with Indignation and Hatred against sin. 2 *Cor.* vii. 11. Many a Man would live peaceably with his sin, and never be troubled; but the Lord stirs up sin by the Law, sin is such an evil, dangerous, and prejudicial Neighbour, vexing the poor Soul continually with its Wiles and Tyranny, that the Soul is made to hate it with an implacable Hatred; Is this it that seeks my Ruin? Is this the Enemy that continually opposes me? Is this the Strumpet, the Cousenet

that

that vexes me continually with its Wiles, and deceives me, telling me Lies, pretending Friendship, and promising Happiness, and yet no such Thing; but all to enslave me to my Lusts, and to damn me at last: Is this it that is the Lord's Enemy in me, and in all the World, and that crucified the Lord of Glory? Is this the Rebel that rebels against the Lord, against whom War is denounced, that no less will content than the King's own best Room, and that seeks by all Means to conquer it? Oh hateful World! Oh hateful Flesh! Oh poisonous Deceiver! O cruel, dangerous, prejudicial Poison! Is it so indeed? Yes indeed, I see, I feel it, I was mistaken, and blindfolded, the World and sin is now a far other Thing than I took it to be, I see it nothing, but a deceiving, base, evil Bubble, a Rebel unto the Lord of Glory, and my greatest, though slieſt Enemy.

4. HEREUPON the Soul resolves against Sin and the World, and studies Revenge: The World is now arraigned, and proven guilty of a capital Crime; and it appears in its own Colours, a naughty, strong, tyrannical, dangerous, despiteful, and bloody Enemy, against whom it sees it self called to make War by the Lord himself; so that

now nothing appears more evil; and therefore, oppose it, it must fight, or dy: No Peace, or else Enmity with God, no Peace, else a Slave to sin and Satan for ever; no Peace or Truce, but what is bought with the Loss of God's Favour, and with the Loss of its own Soul, and this the Soul feels, knows, and certainly perceives; thereupon it proceeds to a Resolution, come on, let us join against the World, against the Flesh: Quit your selves like Men, fight and overcome I must, or dy; there is no Mids: I am resolved to join henceforth with the Lord Jesus, against the corrupt Interest in my self, and against the Lord's Enemies, and cursed be the Hands that spares; so then, open War is denounced, 'tis resolved, concluded upon, and determined, that there shall be no Peace with *Amalek* for ever, I must, and will overcome saith the Soul. *Hos.* xiv. 3.

5. All Means are tried, Meditation *concerning the Evil of Sin*, how to get it destroyed; and hence Plottings, and Devisings, what shall be done, Meditation rouses up the Soul, and serious Consideration like a Spur, encourages and pricks forward the Heart, as a Lion rouses up his Courage, by smiting himself with his Tail, reading in

in the Scriptures, waiting there for Light, for Power, for Life; Faith likewise is set on Work from the Lord's Promise, the Death of Christ, and Goodness of God, whence Provision is daily fetched unto the Camp, and the Soul encouraged, and the Lord engaged to help, Prayer, like a Messenger, goes to Heaven, and brings down Strength and Furniture, raises Complaints, and brings the Lord's Supply down, groans, mourns, intreats, requests, pleads, and overcomes. *Ephes.* vi. 16, 17, 18. These are the Weapons with which the soul fights and overcomes. 2 *Cor.* x. 4. Mighty through God to the pulling down strong Holds, watching and waiting on the Lord; the Soul not only looks to its self, but observes the Enemies, these are the Means.

6. THERE is a cutting off the Provision of the Flesh, or a denying of sin and the World; there was nothing before, but peaceable subjection, and sin reigned like a Tyrant, and commanded all; now its Authority is despised and cast off, and sins Precepts, and Commands are despised, and denied, the Power of sloath said before, save thy self, take thy Rest; this is denied, the Appetite at Meat, seeks and craves at the Hands to fulfil it; this is denied, there is

an Occasion of venting thy self, and thy Parts, this is denied, and this is called *a not fulfilling of the Lust of the Flesh*; nay, Temptations to sin are denied; so that sin is blockt up like *Jericho*, and none is suffered to come in or out, and sin is starved and famished, when all the Fewel thereof is taken away, when all Occasions and Temptations are removed; so that the Heart of Sin breaks and dies, not having wherewith to maintain it by; and though it seek, and importunately seek too, yet it is denied, nothing can prevail; and if there be any Thing the Watch discovers, guards and informs.

7 A Watch is set which sees, observes, notices, suspects, gives Information, guards against, and provides, examines every Thing; and hence, Heart, Tongue, Eyes, Hands, Company, Sins, Actions, Graces are set in them all; so that every Thing is discovered, examined: This is the Soul's Intelligencer, which shows in what Case Things are; this gives Information; this foresees what will come, and foresees what is to be done; this like a Guard and Bank, keeps every Thing in due Order and Place.

8. THERE is a persecuting, fighting, and actual killing of Sin, with Heart, Tongue,

Tongue, and with Hands; here a sweet Sin that yields me much sweet Profit: Oh! away with it like a menstruous Cloath, this is bitter, this is a plucking away of the right Hand; here is a Vanity that takes away the Heart from the Lord; forsake it, use it not more; the Flesh grudges, let it do so; here is carnal Company, the Heart delights in it, finds it sweet to stay, and lothe to part; the Spirit saith, leave them, lest Evil befal thee; Sin strives, pleads again on the other Hand; now it comes to fighting, there is a violent resisting, and rising, and retiring, and so Sin is crucified. A Christian is among bad Company, they spend their Time in Vanity, they swear and speak idly; strike in saith the Spirit, plead for God, testify against the World for Christ, bring in a good Discourse, that the Lord may be honoured: Oh! no, saith the Flesh, it is in vain, unseasonable, unprofitable, brings much Evil; here the Battle begins, at last a Word is spoken, and this is like a Dagger in the Heart of the carnal Part, a Man is under great Indispositions, he is called to pray, he rises; here a Man's Flesh is crucified, he sustains an Affront, Revenge it, saith sin, no, saith the Spirit, Vengeance is mine, he suffers,

the Heart, the carnal Part groans, frets, and so in many Cases.

9. THERE is judging of our selves, which is a spiritual Revenge that is taken, look as in Nations and Kingdoms, Traitors are put to Death, and Offenders punished, according as their Crime is; so it is here for some Time, and very oft the Flesh prevails, and its Desires are obeyed, and through Security and Sloth, a great Overthrow is given; hereupon there is a Punishment inflicted, a godly Revenge taken, an afflicting of it self, by loading and terrifying the Flesh with Threats of the Law, until it tremble again, by afflicting the Soul with fasting, by denying the Use of some lawful Comfort, by submitting to humbling Duties, and this until their Heart be tamed, and made sensible of its Evil, so as like a corrected Child it stands in Aw of sinning; and this in Scripture, is called an afflicting of our selves, a judging of our selves, a godly Revenge, a humbling of our selves, a taking with the Punishment of our Sins, a correcting of themselves, a beating down of their Body, that, look as the Lord punishes Sin with Stripes; even so did they voluntarily judge themselves, that they may not be plagued of

of the Lord, not to satisfie God, but to satisfie their own Revenge, and to take Vengeance of the Lord's Adversaries, and to put Evil away, and to daunten the Flesh, and to help forward Heart-rending for Sin, and to make Sin bitter to us, not an afflicting of the Body by Pennance, Pilgrimage, Fasting, *for bodily Exercise profiteth little*, but an afflicting of the Soul, and though it do not satisfie God as a Judge, for Christ hath done this; yet it satisfies him as a Father, who is well pleased, when Justice is executed, and Evil taken away.

MEDITATION XIII.

The Nature of this spiritual Combat tried, by which it is differenced from the striving betwixt a natural Conscience and Sin.

IT is without Doubt, that there may be a Wrestling in a natural Man's Breast betwixt his Sin and his Conscience, and the Truth, though kept in Unrighteousness, will make a Stir, witness and protest, excuse or accuse; sin, though it cannot win to command absolutely, yet it may trouble, yea,

and find some Reverence likewise, and make a *Herod* do many Things; yet it may easily be distinguished betwixt the spiritual Combat, that Saints find in themselves.

1. The Spirit or the new Man fights against all sins, the natural Conscience against some sins, the Spirit hates every false Way, sins of Omission, as well as sins of Commission, secret sins, as well as publick sins, small sins, as well as great sins, spiritual sins, and Gospel sins, as well as sins against Nature, sins of others, as well as our own sins. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 5. *Joh.* xvi. 9. *Zech.* xii. 10. *Ezek.* xx. 43. *Psal.* xix. 12. 1 *Pet.* ii. 8. 1 *Pet.* i. 15. 1 *Thes.* v. 22. The other only for gross sins, and their own sins; as *Jehoahaz*, *Judas*, and *Herod*, who did many Things for *John* the *Baptist*. Mark vi. 20, 26.

2. The Spirit strives against sin in the Root, *Rom.* vii. 24. and hates his evil Nature, the other against actual sins; I hear not that Hypocrites mourn for an evil Nature.

3. The Spirit opposes sin, from a deadly Enmity to sin, and the Nature of it, he hates sin; and therefore opposes it, and loves his Duty, which is revealed: The other

other hates the Light that reveals him, his sin, as sore Eyes do the Sun, and strives against the Sun, as prejudicial to him; and like the Smith, touches not the Charcoal because it files him, but because it burns him: A Man hates the Toad, though it never poison him; hence, the Phrases of hating, of loathing of sin; the one shuns his sin, as an expensive Friend to his Credit and Peace; and therefore banishes him, as *Absolom* was by *David*.

4. The one seeks the Death of sin; hence opposes it most violently, and is not content while any Spot remains; hence is said to crucifie the Flesh, to beat down their Body; the other is content only with as much as gives him Peace, and hence, seeks no more Holiness than brings him to Heaven, or that quiets Conscience. *Col.* iii. 5. *Job* xii. 23. Hence, he opposes it but slenderly, as in Jest.

5. The spiritual Man fights and overcomes by Love and Faith, and such spiritual Motives and Means. 2 *Cor.* v. 14. *Rom.* vi. 14. The other by Terrors, and by legal Motives. *Rom.* vii. 6. *Gal.* iv. 24, 25. The one overcomes by Gospel Motives and Means. 2 *Cor.* iv. and v. Chapters throughout; and hence, the one oppoſes sin, and doth Duties that

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he may live, the other becauſe alive, *Rom.* vi. 11, 13. *Acts* xv. 9. 1 *Joh.* iii. 3.

6. The ſpiritual Man not only oppoſes ſin, and denies Obedience to it, but yields them unto God. The natural Man is ſeldom in Poſitives, except in Duties; ſuch as praying, reading, and ſuch fair Offices, *Luke* xviii. 12.

7. The Conteſt in the ſpiritual Man, is throughout the whole Man, in every Faculty; in the natural Man it is only in divers Faculties, as in his Light and Affections; and hence he loves, what his Light declares to be wrong. The other loves his Sin in ſome Part, and hates it too; and hence there are two compleat Nations, the old Man and the young.

8. The ſpiritual Man fights, and conquers and triumphs at laſt, and cleanſes himſelf and overcomes, 1 *Joh.* ii. 12. Light in the other teſtifies, pleads, wreſtles, but is overcome, and holden in Unrighteouſneſs. *Rom.* viii. 2. *Mark* v. 26, 27. The old Man grows ſtronger and ſtronger in the one, and weaker and weaker in the other.

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MEDITATION XIV.

Cautions in our spiritual Warfare.

1. FIGHT not against the World and the Flesh, till ye get a Commission so to do; we fight for Life, ere we get Life to fight; we do the Lord Service, ere we take on to be his Servants; we run, ere we be sent; and we drink of God's Wine, ere we buy: I mean, we should first believe and engage with God, ere we serve the Lord. *Rom.* xii. 1, 2. First yield your Bodies, then be not conform to the World; I know we are all engaged in Baptism, but we must renew our Engagements, and any Right or Privilege the Lord hath in us, or we in him, must be renewed and confirmed, else it will not avail: 'Tis true indeed, the Word gives a Commission, and engages us outwardly; but this Law must arise in our Hearts and Minds, else we will never serve the Lord; but in the Oldness of the Letter, and never in the Newness of the Spirit. *Rom.* ii. 29. Nor do I mean that the Word as inwardly revealed, is the Rule of our Obedience, as many do think, for this is Enthusiasm: No, the outward Word,

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or God speaking in his Word, is no Doubt our Rule; but this I mean, though the Scriptures be our Rule, by which we are to square our Life, yet will we nor any other conform our Lives unto the Scriptures, until the Lord write this same Rule in our Hearts; therefore, we must get an inward Commission and Call, ere we serve the Lord spiritually, *Psal.* xl. 8. which is requisite not to bind us, for this the outward Law doth, but to help us, to walk according to our Rule. *Jer.* xxxi. 32. Oh! therefore look up to him, till he call thee inwardly by that same outward Word, else ye will never obey from your Heart, outward, forced and fleshly Obedience ye may give, but not spiritual.

2. BEWARE of separating the Comforts and Encouragements to Duty, from the Duty it self; the Encouragements to Duty are God's Commission, *Josh.* i. 9. His Presence with us, and promised Assistance to help us in it, and after it, *Deut.* xx. 1, 3, 4. *Numb.* xiv. 9. The Lord's accepting of it, and accounting it as done to him, *Mark* ix. 37. The Profit and great Reward in it, and after it, *Matth.* xix. *ult.* *Psal.* xix. 11. And the Ground and Reason of it. Never a Lust we mortify and kill, but in the Belly

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and Heart of it is Life, *Mark* viii. 35. Every Command is full of Treasure and Riches. I say, the separating of this from Duty, makes Duties burdensome and intolerable; we look to the Evil, the Prejudice and Hazard in Duties, but looks not to the Good in it; we should do in this Case, as in a River that runs with a great Spait, we should not look to the River it self, else our Heads will be dizzie; but we must look to dry Land. When we see the Evil of a Duty, our Heads by poring on it becomes dizzy, and we faint; but look to the Encouragement, hold off your Eyes off the Evil, know them not, look not to them, consider them not, but lean on your Staff, and hold your Eye on Christ, on the Reward, and know nothing of carnal Interest, wink there, *Deut.* xxxiii. 9. Take in all Considerations.

3. Beware of acting legally, and seeking Righteousnes by the Law; do no Duties to God as a Judge that requires this much, that gives no Strength, and will cast off if ye do not it; but act as under Grace, *Rom.* vi. 14. Do them as the Commands of a loving Father, in which he delights, and which he accepts, nay, which he propose you that ye may learn to do it, and for your

Good,

Good, and which himself is at Hand, as a Craftsman is to his Prentice, to help you what ye cannot do, and which ye are to do, not to get his Favour and Love, but because ye have it, and that ye may get it more, *John* x. 10. and which if ye will not do, yet will not cast thee off, but pity thee, if through Weakness, and punish with Fatherly Stripes, if with Wilfulness; but *will not cast thee off, nor take his loving Kindness from thee,* Psal. lxxxix. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. And which if thou shalt do, he shall abundantly reward, and that if any Thing be done right according to his Will; for there is nothing that occasions sin more than legal Working: And hence the *Jews* mist of Righteousness, though they sought to obtain Righteousness, because they sought it as it were, *by the Works of the Law, and not by Faith, Rom.* ix. 31, 32. and hence, *Rom.* vii. 6. they are said to be *held in it, Gal.* iii. 23. and in the Law they are shut up as in a Prison; for consider God as a Judge, a rigid severe Master, that meerly of Sovereignty commands such Things, and gives no strength to do it, and yet threatens Death and Damnation if they do it not, and when it is done finds Fault, and casts off for all sinfulness in it; this, I say,

breaks

breaks the Heart, and discourages the Soul, so as it becomes exceeding heartless, and therefore slothful, as ye may evidently perceive in that slothful Servant; What was the great Cause of his sloth? Oh! *I knew thou wast a hard Master, and* hence *was afraid and hid it in the Earth,* Matth. xxv. 24, 25. When therefore any hard Duty is put unto thee to do, say not thou art a Child, be not dismayed, affright not thy Heart, neither scourge it violently by Terrors unto the Duty; but be moderate, looking up unto the Lord for Strength and Life, as unto a Father, and putting up his gracious Promise for Help; and though Help comes not, yet be not discouraged, but be humbled.

4. BEWARE of going to any Duty in thy own strength; no Man is to go a Warfare on his own Charges; *Adam* had his Life in himself, and was to act from received strength, and it was as natural to him as for us to eat, drink, and walk, and he needed no more supernatural special Assistance to any Duty, than we need to our natural Actions; but it is not so with us, our strength is not in our selves; for our spiritual Life is hid in Christ, and it is of him *to do and will of God's own good Pleasure,* and we

we without him can do nothing; he is *our Life, and the Health of our Countenance,* Psal. xlii. 11. Deut. xxx. 20. Isa. xxvii. 3. he is *our Soul's Food, and it is by him we live, the Life of Light,* John i. 4. Psal. xxvii. 1. *of Comfort,* Psal. xlii. 11. and xliii. 5. *of Holiness,* 1 Cor. i. 30. *and Strength,* 2 Tim. ii. 1. Eph. vi. 10. And this is not natural to us, but is due only by Promise, though it be suitable unto their holy Nature, yet the actual Exercise of Grace, is a Thing wherein the Lord exercises much Sovereignty, and therefore is he to be depended upon; when therefore ye go on against your Lusts, look off thy self, stand not on thy own Bottom, but come out in the Name of the Lord against them, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 45. as Soldiers do that are to perform a desperate Piece of Service, they take a good Scoure of Wine, to chear and hearten them; so do thou, encourage thy self in the Lord, eat the Flesh, and drink the Blood of the Son of God, and this will strengthen thy Heart, and enlighten thine Eyes as the Honey did *Jonathan's,* and as Meat doth the Body; feed by Faith on his Love, Power and Greatness; for *in his Favour is Life, and his Love is better than Wine.* I say, feed on these, and thou shalt find strength from the Lord arising

arising from this; take a Draught of the Water of Life, and thy Heart shall be encouraged and strengthned thereby; go on in the Confidence of his Help and Assistance. A Man that's sure of Help from another in Time of Need, will venture to fight against any Man, though he be stronger than he, *Isa.* l. 7. *Numb.* xiv. 9. *Deut.* xx. 3, 4. *Josh.* i. 6, 7. Lay hold on his Strength, and thou shalt have Peace, *Isa.* xxvii. 5. When a Man ventures and resolves to do any Duty in the Faith of God's Promise, this Man *goes on in the Strength of the Lord, and in the Power of his Might.*

5. BEWARE of *Saul*'s Fault, his foolish Pity; beware of *Ahab*'s Pity, that saves those whom God hath appointed to Destruction, lest thy Life go for their's; deal not tenderly with thy Sins and Lusts, spare them not, but labour to crucify them, spare neither small nor great; see how much they are thy Enemies, how evil, how vile they are, and how prejudicial, until thy Heart have conceived an irreconcileable Hatred unto thy Sins and Lusts, so as nought but their Lives will satisfy thee; *crucify the Flesh, with the Lusts and Affections thereof*; look upon them as thy greatest Enemy; we have need of this, our carnal self holds

our Arm oft-times, while we are seeking to cut the Throat of our Idols, and makes the Stroke fall with less Might: *Whatsoever thy Hand doth find to do, do it with all thy Might.*

6. It is our Fault that we endeavour against Sin, and shun not the Temptations to sin; beware of marching unto the utmost Border of what is unlawful; keep thee far from the Way of the Whore: The *Nazarites* that were forbidden Wine, were forbidden to handle the Grapes of it, *Put Iniquity far away from thee*, *Job.* xxii. 23. if thou wilt return, if ye would not eat forbidden Fruit, touch it not, stand at very great Distance, beware of Places, Company, Occasions, Thoughts that estrange thy Heart from God, or may be a Snare unto thee; take not the Names of their gods in thy Mouth, enquire not how other Nations worshipped their gods, shun all Appearances of Evil, go not to the High-priest's Hall, lest thou deny Christ. Next, hearken not to any Thing that may draw on a Triste betwixt Sin and thee; nay, thy necessary Occasions watch over them; never think to shun Sin, while ye swallow Sins Baits. *Gen.* xxxix. 10. 1 *Thes.* v. 25. *Numb.* xxv. 26. *Job* xxxi. 1. *Isa.* xxxiii. 15. *Ex.* xxiii. 8.

7. Beware

7. BEWARE of encountering Sin, only by Resolution and Words, we speak, pray, and resolve, and think against Sin, but we put little in Action; many are like Cowards, stout behind Backs, but when it comes indeed to Action, they turn their Backs; many while in Private, and in their Quarters, do eat and drink in the House of their God, and curse sin, and say, Who is Satan that we should serve him? and yet within a little while, when it comes to the Push, they are afraid, and sink and turn back, and *where is the Mouth*, &c. *Judg.* ix. 27, 28. Let thy Works commend thee, show thy Stoutness and Courage more by thy Actions, than by thy Words. *Deut.* v. 28, 29. *Ex.* ix. 19. *Jer.* ii. 20. *Luke* vi. 46. and xxii. 33. Love not in Word, but likewise in Deed, and so in Truth; ye deceive others, and if ye think ye are real, your own Heart hath deceived thee. The greatest Pleasure thou can do unto God, is to do, hide not his Righteousness in thy Heart, but declare it by doing for him. *Psal.* xl. 9, 10.

8. Do not imagine, though the Lord help, but ye shall find Difficulty; dream not to be carried to Heaven in a Down-bed sleeping, God destroys not Nature, nor annihilates it, nor Sin, nor the World, though

though he conquers it, every Town falls not down as *Jericho* before us: And the Lord doth not always from Heaven throw down great Stones on our ſpiritual Enemies; we muſt fight and ſweat, and faint and travel, and be in Pain, the ſtrong Man will fight ere he loſes his Intereſt in our Hearts, and all the Saints have a bloody Victory of it; Theſe are they, who have come out of great Tribulations, when there is a very great Gale of the Spirit, and ſtrongeſt Aſſiſtance, ſome Trouble we ſhall find: Nature is Nature ſtill, though Chriſt's Yoke be light and eaſie, yet 'tis a Yoke ſtill, and a hard Yoke at firſt; and ſo will it ſtill be proportionable unto the reſiſting Part it meets with, crucifying is not without Pain, and cutting off the right Hand, and the right Foot is not done or wrought, as *Eve* was created, while *Adam* was ſleeping.

9. Be not diſcouraged, though ye prevail not ſo ſenſibly, do not think or dream to overcome all at once; no, but by little and little. *Exod.* xxiii. 30. And therefore, when one Enemy is overcome, thou muſt overcome another; and therefore, never think thou haſt done, till Death come and bid thee lay down thy Commiſſion, having done all, ſtand. *Finally*, Fight reſolutely in good Earneſt, as doing the Lord's Service, and by his Strength enduring thereinto unto Death patiently, and the Lord ſhall be with thee unto the End.

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